



RIGHT USING MP'S MURDER
TO STOP CRITICISM OF TORIES
DON'T LET THEM OFF THE HOOK >>PAGE 7



AMILCAR CABRAL,
GUINEA, AND THE
LIBERATION
STRUGGLE >>Pages 14&15

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**PROTEST, STRIKE, DISRUPT
COP26 CLIMATE MEETING**

STOP THE CLIMATE KILLERS



ALL OUT ON SAT 6 NOVEMBER >>PAGES 10&11 AND 20

TRAVELLERS

**Dale Farm
evictions—one
decade later**

IN OCTOBER 2011, there were brutal scenes as police evicted Travellers from their homes in Dale Farm in Essex.

The brutality of the eviction was a stark signal of the shocking level of racism that Travellers face in Britain today, writes Dale Farm Residents Association ex-secretary Grattan Puxon.

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ANTI-RACISM



**Stop the racist
borders bill,
says refugee**

ACTIVISTS AT an anti-racist conference want to ramp up resistance to the Tories' Nationality and Borders Bill.

The bill would criminalise refugees who cross the English Channel.

Refugees and their supporters at the Stand Up To Racism conference say it must be stopped.

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IMPERIALISM

**Rising tensions
over Taiwan in the
South China Sea**

US WARSHIPS have been playing war games in waters east of Taiwan. Chinese warplanes weren't asked to play, but they still joined in.

It was the latest escalation of rising tensions over Taiwan. Rival imperialisms are behind the dangerous crisis.

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THE THINGS THEY SAY

'It's important not to reach for knee-jerk reactions, or apportion unnecessary blame'

Dan Hodges calls for calm after the Killing of Tory MP David Amess

'We have to begin to talk about and confront the scourge of left wing extremism'

Hodges resumes normal service a few paragraphs later blaming Angela Rayner and John McDonnell in particular and the left in general

'Labour MUST kill vampire Jezza'

Dan Hodges article published ten days after Labour MP Jo Cox was killed

'Honoured to be appointed United Nations Special Representative'

Matt Hancock announces he has a new job

'Mr Hancock's appointment by the UN Economic Commission for Africa is not being taken forward'

The UN announces he hasn't



43,000 people given the wrong Covid test results

AT LEAST 43,000 people may have been wrongly given a negative Covid-19 test result, the UK Health Security Agency has said.

It has announced the suspension of operations at Immensa Health Clinic at its privately-run laboratory in Wolverhampton.

NHS test and trace said about 400,000 samples had been processed through the lab, the vast majority of which will have been negative results.

But an estimated 43,000 people may have been given incorrect negative PCR test results between 8 September and 12 October, mostly in south west England.

The government awarded Immensa a £119 million contract to "develop volume" for Coronavirus testing last



Faulty?

year. It was granted without a standard tender process.

Companies House records show that the firm was incorporated on 18 May 2020, soon after the onset of the pandemic.

Immensa has one officer and owner—Andrea Riposati—who is also the

co-founder and CEO of an Italy-based firm, Dante Labs.

Dante offers multiple services, primarily the creation of a genetic profile by analysing "100 percent of your DNA".

This, the company claims, can help an individual to understand their vulnerability to genetic diseases and health risks.

In the US, Dante Labs admitted having sent five used DNA test kits to customers containing the saliva of other people.

One reported finding the tube where he was meant to deposit his spit was already filled with bubbly liquid and sealed up in a biohazard bag.

Despite this, Immensa won a further £50 million contract from the government as recently as July. It appears to have opened another

PCR testing laboratory at Charnwood, Leicestershire, in September, with the launch attended by the Tory MP for Loughborough, Jane Hunt.

Dr Kit Yates, a mathematical biologist at the University of Bath and a member of the Independent Sage group of scientists, suggested the suspected testing errors could have had serious consequences.

He said, "We now know 43,000 people are believed to have been given false negatives, but this doesn't even come near to the cost of the mistake."

"Many of these people will have been forced into school or work, potentially infecting others."

"This could be part of the reason behind some of the recent rises we've seen."

THE SPRAWLING Marbella estate where Boris Johnson stayed last week may be an awkward reminder of the questions he faced—and managed to avoid—in the wake of the Pandora papers revelations. The luxurious villa, lent to him by environment minister Zac Goldsmith, has been held by an opaque offshore structure based in multiple tax havens. The papers suggest the minister and his family may have owned the property through a Maltese company held by companies in the Turks and Caicos Islands and administered by a wealth planning firm based in Switzerland.



Hard working Johnson

BUSINESS secretary Kwasi Kwarteng's has a plan to keep fuel bills down. He met with the energy companies last week, looked into a crystal ball, and told them, "For the late winter period from January to February 2022, the most likely scenario is for mild spells". The energy price cap default tariffs went up by £139 last month.

Recruiting a bowl full of scabs at Kellogg

KELLOGG'S workers in the US have been on strike for two weeks. Recently a job advertisement appeared saying baldly, "Kellogg's is Now Pre-Hiring for Strike Replacement Workers".

It went on "Our ready-to-eat (RTE) cereal production facilities in Battle Creek, Lancaster, Memphis, and Omaha are pre-hiring for Hourly Production Employees."

"The unions representing Kellogg's employees in these plants are on strike, and we are looking for employees to cross the picket line and join hundreds of Kellogg salaried employees, hourly employees, and contractors to keep the lines running



Frosty reception for scabs

during the strike."

It then outlined the qualities required. "With your can-do, go-getter, team-player work ethic, we are positive you will fit right in. To be successful in this role, you could certainly use two scoops of communication skills and a bowl full of detail while preparing some of the world's most favourite products for shipment."

Panama mass graves of US invasion victims

SEVERAL BAGS with human remains were exhumed from a mass grave in Panama last week amid searches for the victims of the US invasion of the country in 1989.

The military operation officially took the lives of some 300 civilians. For years, families have called for a search for the remains of those who died, many of whom were buried in mass graves.

Attorney General Geomara Guerra said four bags of remains have been recovered so far at the Monte Esperanza cemetery in the city of Colon. The

remains were discovered in the same bags that US soldiers distributed for burials, he added.

Officials last year began exhuming corpses at another cemetery, called Jardin de Paz, and found the unidentified remains of about 30 people.

Human rights organisations have long estimated the true number of Panamanian victims could be much higher than the official toll of 300.

This prompted former president Juan Carlos Varela to establish a commission to investigate the true number.

No vaccines for the poor

Pharmaceutical firm Moderna has been supplying its Covid-19 shots almost exclusively to wealthy nations, keeping poorer countries waiting and earning billions in profit.

After developing a vaccine with the financial and scientific support of the US state, Moderna has shipped a greater share of its doses to wealthy countries than any other vaccine manufacturer.

That's according to Airfinity, a data firm that tracks vaccine shipments

Of the 22 countries, plus the European Union to which Moderna and its distributors have reported selling the shots, none are low income.

And most middle income countries that have struck deals with Moderna have not received any doses. At least three others are paying higher prices.

Botswana, Thailand and Colombia have said they are paying £19.80 to £22 per dose.

That's more than the US—which paid £11 to £12.10 for each shot—or the EU which paid £16.60 to £18.70. Dozens of poorer countries have so far vaccinated less than 10 percent of their populations.

Donor Covid profiteering

TWELVE companies with links to the Conservative Party, all of which won contracts during the Coronavirus pandemic, have recorded an overall 57.1 percent increase in profits—equivalent to £121.7 million.

Over 30 companies that were linked to Tory donors or were linked to Tory associates won Covid-19 contracts.

Only 12 of these have filed annual returns for the period covering the awarding of their pandemic-related contracts.

However, of the 12 firms that have filed their accounts for the relevant period, they have recorded total profits of almost £334.7 million.

The analysis was done by the Byline Intelligence Team and The Citizens which say "There is no suggestion of wrongdoing on the part of the companies and individuals involved."

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The Dale Farm Traveller evictions—a decade on

by GRATTAN PUXON
ex-secretary Dale Farm Residents Association

IN OCTOBER 2011, there were brutal scenes as police evicted Travellers from their homes in Dale Farm in Essex which was Europe's largest traveller site.

Several Travellers were injured during the raid, including one woman whose back was fractured.

Authorities cut the site's electricity, even though several residents relied on breathing machines.

Police used Tasers on unarmed protesters at the site. The brutality of the eviction was a stark signal of the shocking level of racism that Travellers face in Britain today.

Basildon council refused to tell Travellers when the eviction would begin.

The first they knew of it was when scores of armed riot police stormed the site early on Wednesday morning.

Some 86 Travellers' homes were destroyed, which caused Travellers to shift back into trailer caravans and move onto their private access road.

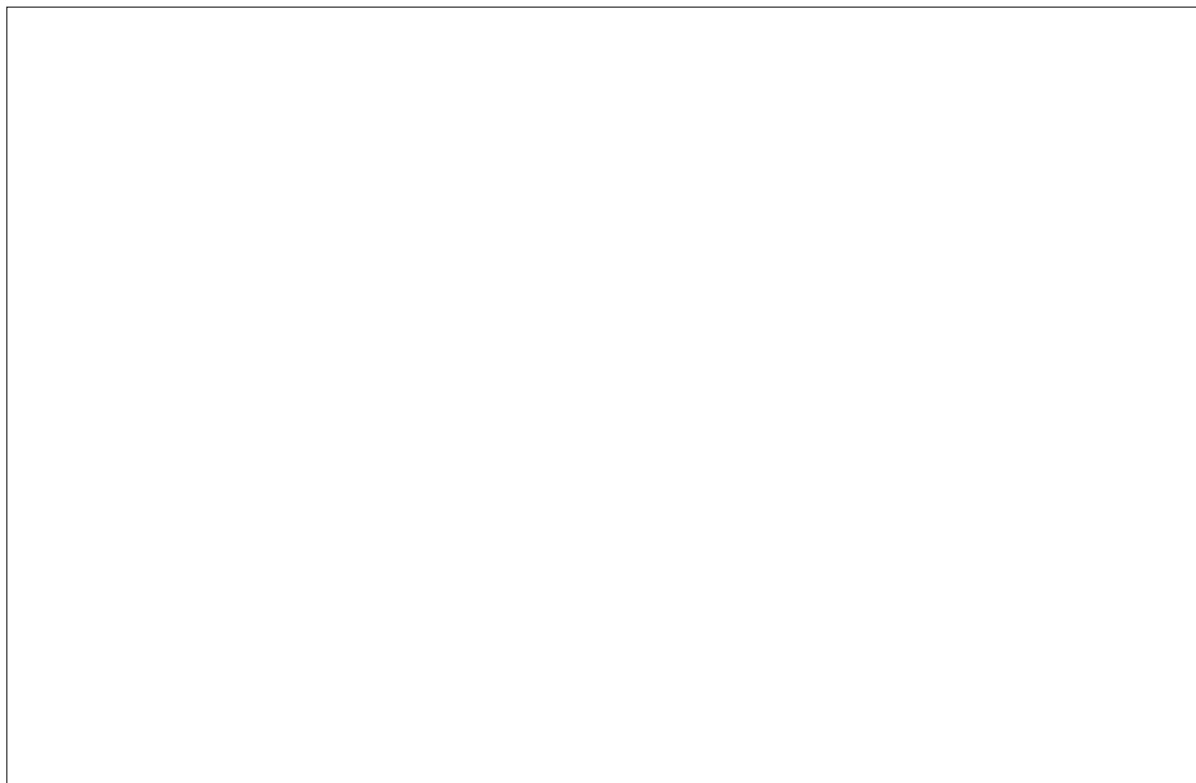
Dale Farm eviction pushed families onto a toxic wasteland. At the cost of some £10 million or more, the intended outcome was never achieved.

On 27 October, we will be gathering at Dale Farm to celebrate Traveller survival and to protest against the Tories' police bill.

We will also call for the release of Charlie Anderson, sent to prison for seven months for the "crime" of living on his own land at nearby Hovefields, Wickford.

We are expecting members of Momentum from Colchester and elsewhere in support of the Drive2Survive campaign led by Jake Bowers and Sherrie Smith.

The event aims to remind people of the futile and destructive nature of the attempted "clearing" of the Dale Farm estate ten years ago.



POLICE MOVE in to evict Travellers living at Dale Farm, in Essex, in 2011

'Where I lived is now a rat's swimming pool'

SOCIALIST WORKER returned to Dale Farm two years after the eviction to speak to those that had been evicted. Here are some extracts:

Mary Sheridan was one of those evicted in October 2011. She told *Socialist Worker*, "I've lived at Dale Farm for eight years.

"I was happy living here. But look at how we have to live now. We're living in filth."

Martin O'Leary is another Traveller who was evicted from the site.

He told *Socialist Worker* that the area he used to live on "is now a pothole, a swimming pool for rats".

The road is covered in mud and potholes. Women are forever pouring soapy water outside their homes in an effort to keep things clean.

Some people ask why the Travellers don't travel and go elsewhere.

But changes in the law have made it harder for Travellers to move around. There are fewer

legal sites for them to go to.

There will be no provision for Travellers evicted from Dale Farm for "political reasons", say Basildon council.

The council's new housing plan includes provision for 121 Traveller pitches over the next 20 years. When asked for the reason behind this, the council's press office told *Socialist Worker*, "That is a political decision".

Protest at Dale Farm, Wed 27 Oct, 1 pm at 1-2 Oak Lane East, the yard of John and Barbara Sheridan

Youth homelessness rises

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS in Britain has increased by an estimated two-fifths in five years, rising to more than 120,000, a leading charity director has warned.

And black African and African-Caribbean households are likely to be disproportionately affected.

Seyi Obakin, the chief executive of Centrepoin, a youth homelessness charity, said its estimates show 86,000 young people in Britain presented to their local authority as homeless or at risk in 2016-17.

That figure increased to 121,000 in 2019-20.

Obakin expressed fears that youth homelessness would worsen as a result of the pandemic, with Centrepoin's helpline receiving a record number of calls since the start of the crisis.

He also believes young black Britons will probably be heavily affected. Analysis by the *Guardian* newspaper shows that although England's black population stands at about 3.5 percent, black households make up 10 percent of those that are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

Homeless

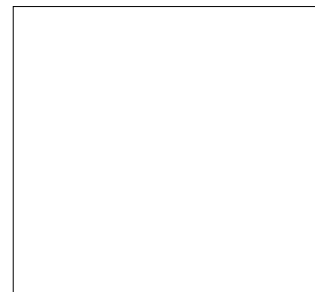
Interest rate rise will add to pressure

THE BANK of England is preparing to raise interest rates in a move that will hit millions of mortgage payers and private renters.

The bank's governor, Andrew Bailey, warned on Sunday that it will "have to act" to curb rising inflation.

Many are speculating that the first interest rate hike will come next month—and that more could follow.

Rising interest rates increase the cost of borrowing. That means tens of millions of people who



Mortgages and rents set to rise

have bought their houses with a loan will pay more.

But the rise will also likely find its way into higher private sector rents too.

The climbing cost of living is already hitting working class people hard.

The RPI measure of inflation has surged to 4.8 percent, household fuel bills spiral upwards and food prices are on the rise.

Combined

Those most reliant on benefits are taking the biggest blows as the Tories refuse to raise them in line with rising bills.

The £20 a week Universal Credit cut, combined with the Tories' ending of the furlough scheme, will plunge many people into poverty.

And, despite talk of rising wages due to labour shortages, millions of workers face "pay freezes" and real-terms pay cuts.

That means their standards of living are falling at a time when the very richest are grabbing an ever-greater share.

According to The Sunday Times Rich List the combined wealth of Britain's 250 richest people has grown by a sixth in the past year.

It is up from £566 billion to £658 billion.

That's why there needs to be a combined fight over pay and benefits—and why the union leaders should sound a battle cry.

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Stop racist borders bill, says locked up refugee

The Stand Up To Racism conference debated solidarity with refugees, fighting institutional racism, and more, reports Isabel Ringrose

ACTIVISTS AT an anti-racist conference want to ramp up resistance to the Tories' anti-refugee Nationality and Borders Bill.

The bill—set to be debated by MPs' committees this week—would criminalise refugees who cross the English Channel, and those who try to help them.

But refugees and their supporters at the Stand Up To Racism (SUTR) online conference last weekend say it must be stopped.

Kenan, a refugee who was held in the now shut Penally camp in west Wales, said, “Legal routes into Britain are like winning a lottery.” “I stayed in a camp near the border of Syria and tried to get on the resettlement scheme,” he explained.

“I stayed for four months but was told I was not applicable.

“People in the same camp had been waiting since 2013—this was at the end of 2016.”

Clare Moseley from the Care4Calais charity slammed the Tories' lie that refugees who come via “illegal” routes and methods are not in genuine need. “Dictators don't issue visas,” she said.

Busted

Clare also busted the myth that the new bill will stop people-smugglers. “The bill won't stop people coming,” she explained. “It'll make crossings more dangerous and mean people are forced to give more money to smugglers.”

Mohammad Asif from the Afghan Human Rights Foundation described how asylum seekers are stuck in “limbo” while they wait for a Home Office decision.

“Britain and the US ruined the lives of people in Afghanistan,” he said. “The US claims to have spent \$2.3 trillion on installing a corrupt government with

warlords and drug lords. Now the Home Office is keeping people in Glasgow in hotels for months and every legal route out is shut.”

The discussion was part of a two-day international conference, which began with over 1,600 people registered for workshops and plenaries on fighting racism.

Topics of other workshops included hostile environment, racist policing and climate refugees—painting a broader picture of government-backed, institutional racism.

Nahella Ashraf from SUTR explained how “The war on terror helped to justify attacks on Muslims and immigrants under the guise of combatting terrorism.”

Violent

Nahella also pointed out that racism from the top has violent consequences.

“After Boris Johnson's comments comparing women wearing the burqa to letterboxes and bank robbers, there was a 375 percent rise in hate crime the following week,” she said.

Around 35 people joined a workshop on the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on black people, institutional racism and the Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities.

Sabby Dhalu, co-convenor of SUTR, said, “The British government denies the existence of institutional racism.

And “instead of addressing the injustice” it is “systematically covering it up”.

Grenfell justice campaigner Moyra Samuels highlighted the way racism was interwoven into the terrible toll of the 2017 fire. Of the 72 people who had died in the blaze, 32 were from the Middle East and north Africa.

She called for jail time for the firms and individuals responsible.

KENAN WAS held in the now shut Penally refugee camp in Wales

Voices from the international struggle

INTERNATIONAL speakers discussed anti-racism worldwide at the Stand Up To Racism conference on Saturday evening.

Marwan Muhammad, former Director of Collective Against Islamophobia in France, spoke about the French state's crackdown on Muslims..

“Despite being voted in instead of the far right, Emmanuel Macron's government is leading the worst public policy against French Muslims,” he explained. “It's targeting any charities that criticise Islamophobia, shutting down mosques and Muslim organisations.”

Elise Bryant from Coalition of Labor Women and United Against Hate in the US said, “The

capitalist, corporate ruling class are using the political construct of race to divide the working class.”

Petros Constantinou from the Greek anti-fascist organisation Keerfa accused the Greek government and the European Union of “murdering” refugees.

“Boats with people from Afghanistan or Syria, pregnant women and children, trying to escape death are met by coastguards.

“They put them in life rafts and push them back without anything.

“This is the reality of EU policies on borders. These dangerous policies are opening the way for fascist attacks around Europe.”

Fighting Britain's racism

THE conference continued on Sunday, with workshops on decolonisation, racism and football, the draconian policing bill and Islamophobia.

In the workshop Love Football Hate Racism and Defend #TakingtheKnee session, former footballer Howard Gayle claimed that the take the knee initiative was linked

an important tool that has been used by anti-racists for decades to show solidarity with victims of racism and defy attempts to divide people.

Speakers at the closing rally included Labour MP Diane Abbott, journalist Gary Younge and Unite union general secretary Sharon Graham.

People trafficking ruling exposes Home Office cruelty

THE HIGH court has ruled the Home Office should give victims of people trafficking the right to live in Britain.

Britain's racist immigration system leaves asylum seekers unable to work, study or access benefits while they apply for refugee status. But now, the ruling says trafficking victims should be granted leave to remain in Britain.

The ruling—and the case it was based on—is a damning indictment of how Britain treats victims of people trafficking.

The court case centred on a Vietnamese woman

who was forced into sex work in Vietnam, then transported to Britain in the back of a lorry.

Between her arrival in Britain and March 2018, she was forced to work in brothels and in cannabis factories.

In April 2018 she was recognised as a trafficking victim. But by October was charged with conspiring to produce cannabis was later sentenced 28 months in prison.

In May 2019 lawyers again referred her for a trafficking assessment, but the Home Office claimed it had no record of her case.

By the following month, it found her record, but then locked her in an immigration detention centre.

Despite being legally recognised as a trafficking victim, her asylum appeal is still ongoing.

The Home Office is trying to get around the ruling. A spokesperson claims the judgment “does not state that leave must be granted to all victims of modern slavery”.

Instead, they say “it may be necessary when a victim is pursuing a claim for asylum based on the fear of being re-trafficked.”

Part of the anti-fascist rally in Rome on Saturday

Unions hold mass rally against fascists in Italy

ITALY'S unions rallied last Saturday, calling on the government to ban fascist groups involved in the previous weekend's violent protests against a Covid health pass.

Some 200,000 people attended the rally in Rome, according to the Il Manifesto newspaper, with 800 coaches and 10 trains laid on.

Some waved flags reading, “Yes Vax.” They were a direct retort to the protesters armed with sticks and metal bars who trashed CGIL's Rome headquarters on 9 October.

Last week, police arrested 12 people, including leaders of the fascist group Forza Nuova. That was after thousands took to the streets to oppose

mandatory “green passes” for all workers.

The response saw placards reading “Fascism—never again” fill Piazza San Giovanni—a square historically associated with the left.

Numerous speakers called for a ban on Forza Nuova.

Militias

“This is not just a retort to fascist ‘squadrismo,’” CGIL secretary general Maurizio Landini said, using a word used to refer to the fascist militias that began operating after World War I.

“This piazza also represents all those in Italy who want to change the country, who want to close the door on political violence,” he told the crowds. “A country

that loses its memory cannot have a future,” he added.

New measures require workers to show proof of vaccination, a negative rapid swab test or recent recovery from Covid-19 before going to workplaces.

Under the new rules, those who do not have a “green pass” must take unpaid leave. Employers will be responsible for verifying the certificates. Workers risk fines of up to 1,500 euros for not complying.

The Rome demonstration concluded with the crowd singing Bella Ciao, the anthem of the anti-fascist resistance for the Italian partisans. **Simon Basketter**

Socialist Worker
WHAT WE THINK

DON'T LET SURGING COVID CASES BE NORMALISED

AS WINTER approaches, the Tories deadly Covid-19 policies are once again threatening to “let the bodies pile high”. The number of Covid-19 cases reached almost 50,000 on Monday—the highest reported since 17 July.

There have only been 16 days throughout the entire pandemic in Britain where cases were higher than now.

There has been a steep rise in cases and deaths this month. It is driven by the continued opening up of the economy, the return to schools and universities and the scrapping of safety restrictions.

In the past week 869 people in Britain have died within 28 days of catching the virus.

With cases sharply rising, an already stretched and underfunded NHS is hurtling towards breaking point. Hospitals across Britain are reporting overwhelmed A&E departments. At Royal Preston Hospital in Lancashire, a patient recently waited 47 hours in A&E for treatment.

One health worker said, “Almost every day, there are over 40 hour waits for beds. It is dangerous. We have had an

unsafe workload for a number of years and are now on the brink of collapse.”

A third health board in Scotland, NHS Grampian, has asked the army to step in to plug shortages

The Tories' drive to bring back business as usual has meant that school pupils are increasingly catching Covid-19. This in turn has led to infections hitting parents and siblings.

The Tories pin their hopes on the vaccines. Although they have cut the number of hospitalisations, they become less effective over time. King's College London's Covid-19 Symptom Study concluded that the effectiveness of the AstraZeneca jab fell from 77

percent to 67 percent, four to five months after a second dose. The Pfizer jab performed only slightly better.

Large parts of the rest of the world look on at the Tories' reckless policies with disbelief and horror.

In Britain the rates of people who've been infected with Covid-19 are 42 percent above the European Union average.

This is all before winter begins. It's before more and more people spend time indoors in rooms with closed windows.

The Tories want this to be normalised. They want everyone to accept 50,000 deaths a year as a price worth paying, so the profits keep flowing.

The government wants us to calmly accept mass contamination even though it risks the emergence of more transmissible, deadly and possibly even vaccine-resistant strains. This is not normal or acceptable.

Every socialist and trade unionist should be demanding more effective safety measures.

The Tories are murderers who have shown, yet again, that they are perfectly content to stand by as tens of thousands of people die.

“An already stretched and underfunded NHS is hurtling towards breaking point

EXPIRED WAR CRIMINAL

THE “PROGRESSIVE” and “moderate” face of US mass murderers is dead. Colin Powell, who died on Monday, helped to sell the 2003 invasion of Iraq to the world.

As George Bush's secretary of state, he presented the United Nations security council with “evidence” of Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

He said his slideshow of blurry photographs showed “sure signs” that chemical weapons were being made and stored in Iraq. Just one

month later, the invasion proved what millions of ordinary people who opposed the war knew already. It was all a bunch of lies.

Powell knew this too—as transcripts of a conversation between him and Labour's then foreign secretary Jack Straw revealed.

Hours before he spoke, Powell told Straw he was worried that the “evidence” would soon “explode in our faces” when the truth came out after the invasion. Straw was worried too. He knew there

was no evidence to back up the claims. But that didn't stop him from praising Powell's “clear and authoritative case” to the United Nations.

Now that Powell is dead, Straw is out again, repeating his support act performance. In newspaper columns and TV interviews, he said history would “judge Colin Powell more kindly than he feared.”

Straw probably worries how kindly history will judge him—together he and Powell told the lies that killed one million Iraqis.

Breakfast in



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Mohammad Asif

Diane Abbott

to billionaire George Soros. That's wrong. Taking the knee is

ANALYSIS

ALEX CALLINICOS



Brexit chaos means trouble for Johnson

BORIS JOHNSON won the 2019 general election by promising to “get Brexit done”. Like all his other promises, this was broken.

Last week Lord Frost, the ex-whisky lobbyist who is now Johnson’s Brexit minister, threatened a new confrontation by demanding the European Union (EU) tear up the Northern Ireland protocol.

Agreed on in October 2019 alongside the broader withdrawal treaty between Britain and the EU, the protocol reflects how both sides used the north of Ireland as a pawn in their manoeuvres. Brussels and London proclaimed their commitment to the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, which ended the latest war between Irish Republicans and the British state.

This requires that the border between the Six Counties in the north and the southern Irish state stays open.

But the EU simultaneously insisted on customs controls between the United Kingdom and the EU after Brexit to preserve the integrity of the European Single Market.

Its aim was to stop British firms undercutting those based in the EU.

So for Brussels there had to be both no border in Ireland and a border between the UK and the EU.

Where did this leave Northern Ireland? It’s part of Ireland—this may seem obvious, but it isn’t to the Loyalist parties in the north.

The ultra-Loyalist Democratic Unionist Party, loudly encouraged by Tory Brexiteers, denounced Brussels for undermining the union between Northern Ireland and the rest of the UK. But, after becoming prime minister, and desperate to make a deal with Brussels, Johnson betrayed the DUP by signing the protocol.

This keeps Northern Ireland in the Single European Market. The price of the Irish border staying open is that EU customs regulations now apply to trade between the Six Counties and the rest of the UK.

The result has been much economic disruption and intense fury in the Loyalist camp. Johnson and Frost tried to deal with this by unilaterally delaying the implementation of various parts of the protocol. The EU reacted by threatening to take Britain to court.

Threat

Now Frost is demanding that the EU agree fundamentally to rewrite the protocol. He repeated the threat that, if it doesn’t, the British government will exercise its right under article 16 of the protocol to take “safeguard measures”—effectively suspending its operation.

The European Commission responded cleverly, by announcing its own package to reform the protocol.

As the analyst Mujtaba Rahman said, this “put the British government in a bind” by going “much further than [it] was expecting”. The Commission promised “to scrap half the paperwork for goods going from Great Britain to supermarkets in Northern Ireland and remove 80 percent of border checks on animals and plants.”

As Rahman says, this faces Johnson with “a huge dilemma”. If he accepts these concessions, he risks being denounced by the DUP and his own backbenchers for caving into Brussels. But if he rejects the offer and invokes article 16, there is a good chance the EU will hit back hard.

The Financial Times reported last week that France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, and Spain lobbied Commission vice-president Maros Sefcovic to draft contingency plans for trade war with Britain. The sticking point could be Frost’s demand that the European Court of Justice (ECJ) no longer has any role in applying the protocol.

The ECJ is loathed by the Tory right, but fetishised by the EU as the guarantor of the “rules-governed” Single Market. One of the few things Johnson really seems to care about is reasserting British sovereignty against the EU. But provoking a trade war over a largely symbolic issue may be too much even for him.

Brussels slapping tariffs on UK exports and intensifying customs checks would be a severe blow to a British economy already reeling from shortages. Business anger over the damage caused by Johnson’s Brexit would increase. So reason suggests he will compromise. But experience suggests that the Brexit mess will get worse.

DAMP AND cold homes are causing mental and physical distress

Mould, cold and illness—the toll of Britain’s housing crisis

by ISABEL RINGROSE

POOR HOUSING is affecting one in five renters’ health in England, according to housing charity Shelter.

Some 1.9 million households face poor housing conditions, with mould, dampness and cold the main causes of physical and mental ill health.

And that’s made much worse by anxiety over struggling to pay rent and the threat of eviction.

The Shelter survey found that 22 percent of renters felt their physical or mental health was being harmed by poor housing.

Another survey of private renters found that 22 percent became physically sick as a result of their housing issues and worries. And a fifth said that their housing issues negatively impacted their work.

Shelter’s chief executive, Polly Neate, said, “The cost of poor housing is spilling out into overwhelmed GP surgeries, mental health services, and hours lost from work.”

She called on the new Tory housing secretary Michael Gove to “get a grip on the housing crisis and tackle a major cause of ill health.”

“The stress and suffering that comes with not knowing if you can pay your rent from month to month or if you will face eviction is huge,” Neate added.

Shelter says it has been

flooded with calls to its helpline of renters stuck in mouldy, cold, unaffordable and insecure housing, with poor health being the result.

Pressure on renters could be lifted if the government provided financial support to help clear rent arrears and build more social housing.

Renter

Krystalrose, a private renter, managed to get out of a mould-ridden flat in London a month ago that she shared with her three-year-old daughter. Both developed

eye infections because of the mould. Krystalrose was forced to throw out her daughter’s cot and the bed she replaced it with because they had become infested with fungus.

“You could see the spores going through the mattress,” she said. “I had a panic and had to throw it out straight away. It is disgusting that people can allow a family to live in a house in that state and not care about it.”

Already housing costs account for over a quarter of all expenditure by families on some of the lowest incomes.

A low-income household typically saves £37 a week renting in social housing compared to the private rental sector.

But waiting lists for social housing are set to double next year to around 2.1 million households—up from 1.6 million last year.

One in ten of those waiting for a decent home they can afford has been on the list for over five years.

Access to proper homes and good health shouldn’t be a privilege for those who can afford it.

Bosses won’t build cheaper homes

HOUSING associations and developers are scrapping plans to build thousands of “affordable” homes as they divert funds to fix a safety crisis.

Rents for affordable homes are set at 80 percent of the normal market rate—already out of the reach of many people.

The largest providers of cheaper housing in London have estimated they will need to spend £3.6 billion on repairs in the next 14 years.

This could provide more than 70,000 new homes. The cost of

replacing combustible cladding and correcting other fire safety defects are the result of developers who failed to build safely in the first place.

Multimillion pound

private firms can afford to fix their failures.

And we need council house building, not relying on the profit calculations of developers and housing associations.

Right using MP’s murder to stop criticism of Tories

POLITICIANS AND the press want to use the murder of a Tory MP last week to silence anger at the government.

The murder of MP David Amess was followed almost immediately with calls for “respect” for politicians and an end to “hatred.”

The speaker of parliament, Labour MP Lindsay Hoyle, wrote in two Sunday newspapers, “The conversation has to be kinder and based on respect. This incident has shown that there is unity across the political divide in support of democracy.

The hate, which drives these attacks, has to end.”

Right wing newspaper columnists were most open about what this really means.

Mail on Sunday columnist Dan Hodges wrote, “Casual hatred of Conservative politicians and activists simply for committing the crime of being Conservatives is not acceptable.”

He said there should be no return to “business as usual” for the left after tributes to Amess in parliament. “Tories—they hate the poor, they hate the migrants. They deserve everything they get,” he wrote.

“They don’t. Because they’re not ‘scum’. Tories are good, honest, decent, committed public servants, who just happen to have a different political philosophy.”

Extremism

Hodges dredged up a quote from Labour MP John McDonnell in 2011, calling for protests and direct action against the Tories, as an example of “left wing extremism” to say this kind of criticism must end.

Meanwhile, the Sun’ columnist Tony Parsons blamed, among other things, anti-racism and the Black Lives Matter movement.

“Jeremy Corbyn’s Marxist, anti-British leadership of Labour divided us,” he wrote. “The culture wars divide us. Israel, abortion, taking the knee and pulling down statues—they all build the barricades that divide us.”

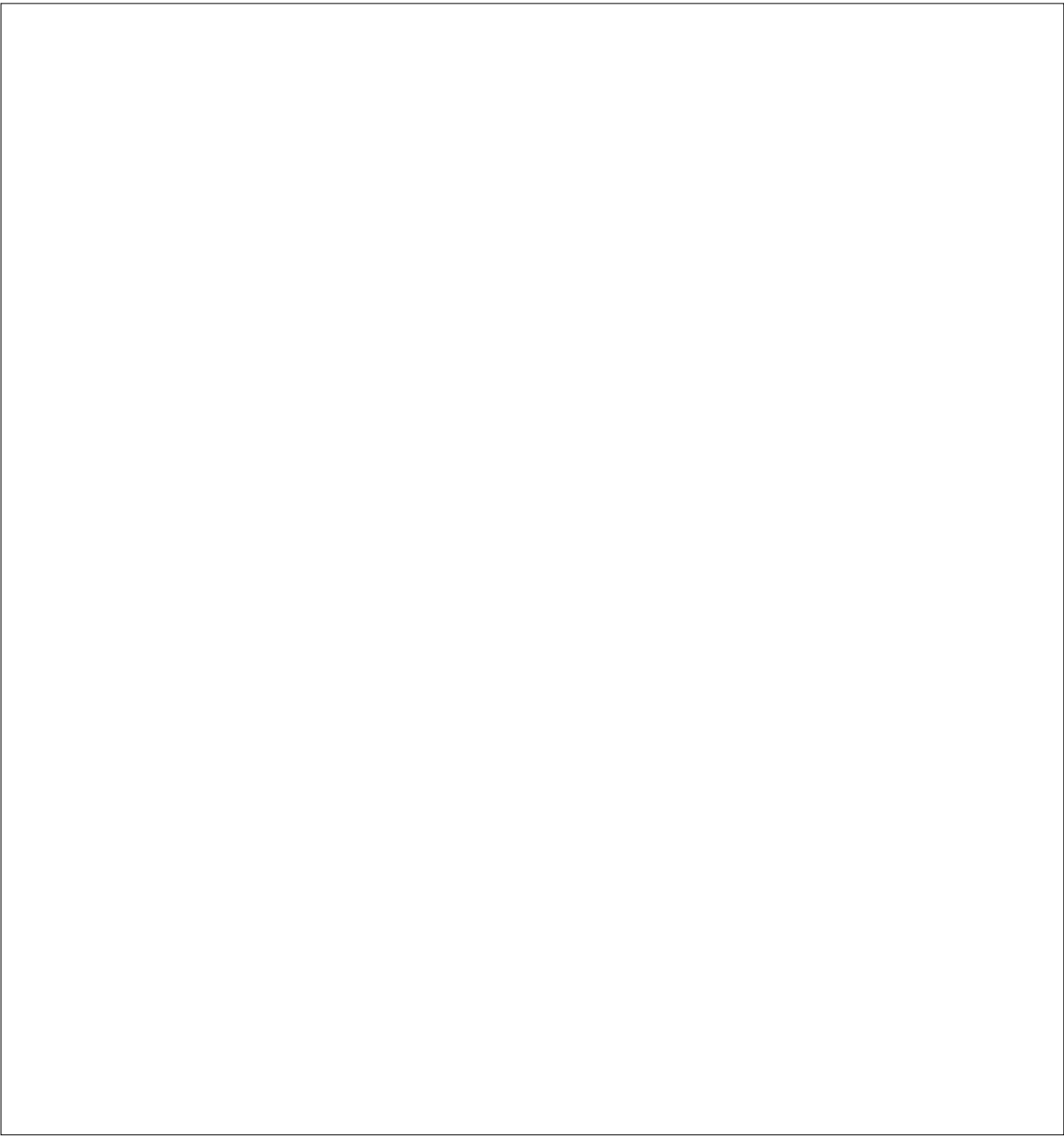
Other newspapers, though less forthright, said the same thing.

Everyone agreed that it was “unacceptable” for Labour’s deputy leader Angela Rayner to call the Tories scum during Labour conference last month.

That’s why Labour MPs fell over



Right wing Tory MP David Amess



MPs FROM all sides rushed to declare ‘unity’ after the murder of David Amess MP last week

themselves to prove they don’t hate Tories. Shadow foreign secretary Lisa Nandy told Sky News on Sunday, “We really do, all of us in parliament, need to tone down the rhetoric towards one another, especially when that strays into rhetoric that is dehumanising.”

Not to be outdone, Labour MP Wes Streeting added, “When I look across the chamber to Conservative MPs, I don’t see a bunch of people who are evil.

“I wish it wouldn’t take awful tragedies like this for us to remind ourselves and particularly to remind the public that we do quite like each other.”

The same people who speak about Amess’s murder as an attack on “democracy” also want to use it to silence protests and anger at the Tories.

No one should be intimidated into ending campaigning, “toning” down criticism, and “unity” behind right wing politics

‘Urgent work’ on Prevent will again target Muslims

AMESS’S MURDER could also pave the way for greater surveillance against Muslims.

Some reports say the suspected killer had been reported to the Prevent programme. This makes public sector workers report people to authorities for signs of “extremism” such as opposing British wars, supporting Palestine, or wearing religious clothes.

It is overwhelmingly used against Muslims.

Tory MP David Buckland said Amess’s killing showed that Prevent—which is

currently under review—needed “urgent” work to become more “effective.”

One unnamed “security source” told the Telegraph newspaper, “counter-terror police and MI5 have been concerned for some time that once we emerged out of lockdown there would be more people out on the streets.

“Combined with the fact that lots of young people have been spending so much time online, it makes for a very worrying mix and there is a real concern about the possible rise of the bedroom radicals.”

US troops in Somalia

The role of imperialism in Somalia

THE ALLEGED killer of David Amess is Ali Harbi Ali, a British citizen of Somali heritage.

He is the son of a former prime ministerial adviser in Somalia.

Somalia has been a target of the great powers ever since its independence in 1960.

It has a strategic position with close access to the oil lanes of the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf. This made it a prize during the Cold War between Russia and the US.

In 1992 the US invaded Somalia, using famine as a pretext. Initially welcomed, the US became hated.

Resistance

Massacres by the US-led forces made them deeply resented and eventually resistance forced a humiliating US withdrawal.

Amid the chaos and poverty caused by the US intervention, various Islamist groups emerged offering stability.

Although harsh, they won popularity compared to what had gone before. They were pushed out by a Western-backed invasion led by Ethiopian forces.

The present government in Somalia survives only because it is backed by 20,000 African Union (AU) troops and the political support of the US.

The Gulf state of Qatar strongly backs the present Somali president.

And the close ties between Amess and Qatar are being investigated by police after his murder.

Amess was chair of the all-party parliamentary group on Qatar and returned from his latest visit there on Wednesday of last week.

New from Socialist Worker

The Great Climate Cop Out—why Cop26 will not solve the environmental crisis

by Martin Empson

Available for £2 from all Socialist Worker sellers, or phone 020 7840 5601, or email swcirc@swp.org.uk



Floods in Greece and India result of ruined ecosystems

by NICK CLARK

DEVASTATING damage caused by wildfires in Greece this year has now given way to widespread flooding.

More than 200 houses on the island of Evia—the site of some of the worst fires—were damaged by floods during storms last week.

The fires have left areas vulnerable to flash flooding. Trees and vegetation that would have absorbed rainwater and acted as natural flood barriers are gone.

Emergency services have faced hundreds of calls to pump out water from homes. And at least some of the people who had to flee their homes during the fires had to evacuate once again ahead of the storms.

Giorgos Tsapourniotis, mayor of Mantoudi in Evia, said, “After the catastrophic fires, came a catastrophic flood. There is nothing left standing.

“We are trying to see if people are safe. Things are terrible, my eyes have never seen such a catastrophe, nor have we seen such a tragic situation as with the fires.”

Head of the WWF charity in Greece Demetres Karavellas said the flooding was a knock-on effect of the fires earlier this year.

“What we are witnessing is the loss of critical ecosystem services that forests provide,” he said. “The natural ability of the soil to withhold water, to act as a flood control mechanism, has been destroyed across a massive area.”

Destruction

The destruction is just one of many consequences of global heating already playing out across the globe.

But Greek governments—that put the interests of profit and business ahead of protecting people and the environment—are also to blame.

Years of cuts left Greece’s fire service unprepared to deal with the widespread fires and now the flash flooding. And privatisation of forest land allowed private companies to destroy and mismanage areas vulnerable to fires.

People in fire damaged areas were then left rushing to improvise flood defences ahead of the storms.

BACK STORY

● Fires swept the Greek island of Evia last year.

● They destroyed ecosystems that could have prevented the floods that are now forcing people from their homes

● And cuts to the fire service mean they haven’t been able to deal with the devastation

● In India flooding is being escalated by the development of a new high speed railway that is affecting the environment

It’s a similar story in India, where a flooding disaster in the southern state of Kerala has already taken more than 20 lives.

Kerala was already hit by unexpected deluges in 2018 and 2019. In both cases landslides and flooding hit millions of the poorest people, and hundreds of them died.

Backwater

Professor CP Rajendran told The Hindu newspaper this week that efforts to “modernise” Kerala’s economy are contributing to recurring disasters.

He points to the building of the new high speed “Silver Line” railway in the state as an example.

The new line will cut through many of the state’s most ecologically fragile coastal ecosystems.

These include wetlands, forest areas, backwater regions, densely populated areas and paddy fields.

Rajendran says its construction will “hasten soil erosion, land degradation, flooding and habitat destruction.”

Many development projects in the state’s hilly areas are particularly vulnerable to landslides.

But construction there continues at a pace with expensive homes being built, rather than more environmentally appropriate dwellings for poorer local people.

Both the hard right wing central government of Narendra Modi and the left wing state government in Kerala are wedded to capitalist development models that are destroying the environment.

PASSENGERS FORCED to abandon their bus due to flooding in Athens last week

SOUTH AFRICA

Metal workers stay strong despite attacks

THE METALWORKERS’ and engineers’ strike in South Africa has become even more important after workers rejected a new pay offer and another union joined the battle.

Over 150,000 members of the Numsa union began an indefinite strike on 5 October over pay.

The 16,000 workers in the Mewusa union joined the action last week.

But Numsa has wrongly

signalled that it’s dropping the demand for an 8 percent rise and will accept 6 percent if it is spread to every worker. The bosses’ most recent offer—that workers rejected—means 6 percent only for some.

The strike is hitting major firms. Car maker BMW said that on one day last week it lost production of around 700 vehicles at its main assembly plant in South Africa due to supply shortages.

Pickets have faced violence from police and private security firms.

At least six workers were injured last week when police fired rubber bullets at a picket line outside the Wireforce plant in Germiston near Johannesburg.

Meanwhile the ANC government refuses to back the strikers and makes vague noises about calm and concessions by both sides.

UNITED STATES

US strikes resist bosses and rotten deals

OVER 10,000 workers began a strike last week at agricultural equipment maker John Deere at 14 plants across the US over pay and other issues.

Around 90 percent of workers rejected a contract their UAW union had negotiated.

Over 2,000 thousand nurses, clerical workers, technologists, and service workers have been on strike at Mercy Health in Buffalo, New York, since the beginning of October over staffing levels.

Meanwhile more than 24,000 Kaiser Permanente health workers

have voted to strike over pay and benefits.

Robert Reich, a former secretary of labour, wrote last week, “American workers are now flexing their muscles for the first time in decades.

“You might say workers have declared a national general strike until they get better pay and improved working conditions.”

That is as yet an exaggeration. But it’s certainly true that US workers are fighting back in larger numbers and rejecting some of the union leaders’ attempts to make them accept sell-out deals.

Members of the UAW auto union on strike in Iowa last week

BA hasn't gone 'woke'

YOU HAVE to feel sorry for the British media. There is so much going on—fuel crisis, climate crisis, Priti Patel wanting to legalise letting migrants drown.

It must be so frustrating that they can't report on all that because they must alert the nation to the horror of British Airways telling its flight crews to drop "ladies and gentlemen" on flights.

Instead crew must now use more gender-neutral language to replace it.

This is, apparently, another example of a treasured British institution caving into the demands of the "woke" left. LGBT+ rights campaigners have been busy demanding Gender Recognition Act reform, better trans healthcare and a conversion therapy ban.

They will probably be surprised to learn that they'd actually been campaigning for yet another deeply tedious gesture from a corporation hoping to drum up positive press.

Not that BA's change is in and of itself bad. Language being more inclusive of non-binary people is good, obviously.

But no amount of inclusive language is going to change the fact that they laid off 10,000 people last year at the height of the pandemic.

And after years of Pride parades dominated by corporate floats and overpriced alcohol, many LGBT+ people are thoroughly fed up with pinkwashing.

Bethan Turner
Tower Hamlets



ILLUSTRATION: TIM SANDERS

'Blackfishing' debate exposes racism in the music industry

THIS WEEK social media was set ablaze after pop artist Jesy Nelson released her new solo track *Bad Boys* featuring Nicki Minaj.

Jesy Nelson has found herself at the centre of controversy as she is being called out for blackfishing.

Blackfishing is a relatively new term coined by an American journalist.

It refers to someone using tools such as makeup, tan, plastic surgery, or hair extensions to present as another race or ethnically ambiguous.

I feel Jesy is rightly being made accountable for this behaviour.

But she is by no means the first pop artist or influencer to do this.

The likes of the Kardashian family, Rita Ora, and Ariana Grande have all been called out before for

tan that was too dark or their use of Afro wigs and braided hair.

On the surface, it's easy to dismiss this controversy as just another Twitter outrage.

But when we look deeper at this complex discussion around blackfishing, it highlights the issue of institutionalised racism within the music industry.

It has allowed for a much-needed conversation about how often black culture is used for profit.

This happens even as the issues facing the black community are ignored.

Black Lives in Music recently conducted a study that found that 63 percent of black music artists have experienced some form of racism.

It is not surprising when for decades black artists, especially black women have highlighted how hard it is to get opportunities within the entertainment realm.

People are tired of being penalised for the darkness of their skin and the texture of their hair, while their white counterparts rise to success and popularity after donning similar styles.

Whatever your thoughts about this controversy may be, whether you think it modern-day blackface or simply just some tan, it shows racism is present in almost every facet of modern-day life.

We must continue to build the anti-racist movement far and wide.

Elizabeth Adofo-Moroney
Bermuda

We must condemn repressive vaccine law

THERE HAS been an article in the paper about opposing vaccine passports (Socialist Worker 28 September).

But I don't think the danger of this is taken up seriously enough.

Looking at places such as Lithuania and also parts of Australia, these laws are resulting in people being prevented from going to work and accessing services.

Is this not a dangerous step towards a totalitarian state, and isn't this time for socialists to say this must not stand? Of course

the safety of workers and others should be protected.

But this must be done through better education and making sure everyone understands the precautions that are implemented.

It should be about letting people make informed choices.

It should not be done by coercion enforced by capitalist and neoliberal governments that are always looking to increase their control.

Colin Crane
Newcastle

Northern Ireland still denies abortion

DESPITE THE legalisation of abortion in 2019, women and girls in Northern Ireland are still having to travel to England to access abortion services.

Shockingly this means that some women are still being forced to continue with unwanted pregnancies.

Many will still be forced to take unregulated abortion pills and seek dangerous abortions.

A high court ruled last week that Northern Ireland Secretary, Brandon Lewis had "failed to comply with his duties" and implement

Brandon Lewis

abortion services.

However, the judge declined to issue an order compelling Lewis to set out a timetable for the provision of these vital services.

This leaves even more

women in a desperate situation with no end in sight.

It's clear the battle isn't over and we can't rely on courts or politicians to defend our rights.

The legalisation of abortion was the result of relentless grassroots organisation and campaigning over several decades.

We need to support activists to continue to fight the British state "tooth and nail" until all women have guaranteed free, safe and legal access to abortion.

Christine Lewis
Leicester

Just a thought...

Self-ish service checkouts?

YOUR ARTICLE on Amazon and cashless trading (Socialist Worker, 13 October) is good but misses some points.

Firstly, automated checkouts are already common, both here in Poland and in the UK.

We boycott them, and so do all our friends. They steal our data and never work correctly—plus they reduce staff.

However, there is always an attendant on hand so supermarkets are never people-less.

Jacka Soplicy
Poland

Tories let elderly die

WE AS carers already knew very quickly that the government didn't care over Covid-19. We knew the Tories weren't bothered about the lives of older people.

They were probably rubbing their hands together happily in the knowledge they wouldn't have to pay more pensions out to them.

Local elections are soon, and I for one will vote these parasites out to protect what's left of our society.

Kadafi Adam
Facebook

Coldplay greenwash charts

COLDPLAY IS doing the first-ever carbon neutral gig in conjunction with BMW!

The fans' dancing will be converted to energy and the gig will be powered by carbon neutral equipment.

However, the band also confirmed that they will be flying between gigs in a private jet.

Michael Holland
South London

Activist gives Shell hell

I STAND with the activist who took to the stage at an event where the CEO of Shell was speaking.

She truly spoke truth to power and revealed the bosses' unrelenting support for the fossil fuel industry at the expense of the planet.

Annie Westwood
Exeter

THE United Nations Climate Change Conference, or Cop26, is less than two weeks away.

The conference will be a meeting point for world leaders and business owners to supposedly come up with a plan to save the planet from climate disaster.

But after 25 failed Cop climate conferences, we can expect false promises and more inaction.

This has real and deadly consequences and already ordinary people are paying the price of politicians' lies.

This year across the world we have seen severe and frequent flooding, wildfires and drought.

Increasing numbers of people are displaced due to the changing climate or extreme weather events.

Now world leaders hope to use Cop26 to camouflage their climate failures.

The Cop26 coalition of environmental organisations, trade unions and other campaigns will take the streets of Glasgow on Saturday 6 November with an expected 50,000 protesters.

Many more demonstrations will hit towns and cities across Britain with organisers hoping the London demo will attract similar numbers.

On 5 November there will be a student strike and workplace actions.

We must protest to demand a genuine climate strategy.

The movement needs to be widespread with militant demonstrations in every city and direct actions such as blocking roads, strikes and occupations.

We must rage against world leaders for their hand in the continuing destruction of the planet.

Achieving climate justice requires system change.

At Cop26 world leaders will continue to prioritise profits of fossil fuel companies and environmentally damaging businesses over people's health.

There can be no more delays, we urgently need a system that leaves fossil fuels in the ground.

At Cop26 as world leaders plot to protect fossil fuel firms, we need to fight for a new system that makes decisions for people, not profit.

1

Bosses push us to the brink

DESPITE what the media and the politicians tell us our individual choices are not what is driving forward climate disaster.

In reality it is the bosses that are pushing the whole planet to the brink of environmental destruction.

Just 100 companies are responsible for 71 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions since 1988 according to the Carbon Majors Report.

2

Leaders sit on their hands

A NEW report published by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) warned that world leaders refusing to act will lead to irreversible climate chaos.

The report said that without significant reductions to greenhouse gas emissions now, it is likely that surface temperatures will surpass the 1.5 degree threshold.

World leaders were given the target of 1.5 degrees almost six years ago at Cop in Paris in 2015. But for six years almost nothing was done.

The latest IPCC report shows at the current rate, it is impossible for us to keep below that limit.

We must cut emissions now or face warming up to 3.1 degrees by 2100.

3

Bosses killing climate activists

THE BOSSES and the government that prop them up are killing climate activists.

In 2020, 227 "environmental defenders" were killed, a record number for a second consecutive year.

The report from Global Witness said since the Paris Agreement was signed in 2015, on average four activists have been killed each week.

4

Unliveable conditions

OVER ONE billion people could be forced to leave their homes due to climate change by 2050 predicts the Australian think tank, Institute for Economics and Peace. And this mass exodus has already begun. In 2020, 55 million people had been forced to relocate due to extreme weather events. The number of climate refugees outnumbers those displaced by conflict and war.

5

Permafrost disappearing

PERMAFROST covers almost a quarter of land surface in the northern hemisphere. It stores nearly half of all carbon stored within the soil. As the permafrost melts it releases carbon into the atmosphere.

Permafrost temperatures increase at a faster rate than atmospheric temperatures. Arctic ground temperatures have risen around 2 degrees in 30 years.

6

War is deadly for the earth

THE US military is a bigger polluter than 100 countries combined. It creates 750,000 tons of toxic waste every year.

Not only is war polluting but the US invaded Iraq in 2003 in the pursuit of oil.

Environmental destruction is a mechanism of warfare, from bombing dams to contaminating drinking water.

7

Pandemics more common

COVID-19 was able to spread to humans as a result of global warming and breaking down ecosystems.

Deforestation and the use of wildland for farming opened the door for disease to spread.

Also global temperature increase can lead to disease carrying animals, such as the mosquito to thrive in new areas.

8

Oceans poisoned

OUR SEAS have become clogged with plastic.

Plastic production has increased rapidly, from 2.3 million tons in 1950 to 448 million tons in 2015. Today's production levels are expected to double by 2050.

This pollutes the water and fish we consume. One third of fish caught for human consumption contains micro-plastics.

9

Workers need climate jobs

TO FIGHT climate change we must fight to transform our economy and society into one fit for the future.

Calls to create one million green jobs must be supported and amplified. This includes fighting for green public transport expansion and transitioning workers from environmentally damaging jobs to green jobs.

10

Leaders knew about the crisis

OVER HALF the carbon emissions that have ever been produced from the burning of fossil fuels have been produced since the Earth Summit in 1992.

This is despite attendees agreeing to reduce their gas emissions. A quarter of carbon emissions has been produced since Barak Obama's presidency—with Joe Biden as vice-president—in January 2009.

11

The world is on fire

IN SUMMER this year huge areas of Europe, North America and parts of Africa suffered wildfires. July was the worst month for wildfires since 2003.

As temperatures increase, plants and soil dry creating the perfect conditions for ignition.

The heat intensity from fires in Turkey was four times higher than the previous national record.

12

Nature is suffering

HUMANS rely on the natural resources biodiverse ecosystems provide such as water, pollination and medicine.

Ecosystems damaged by the extinction and reduction of plants and animals impact the security of those resources. A report from the World Wildlife Foundation discovered a 60 percent decline in the global wildlife population over just 40 years.

13

Indigenous people ignored

INDIGENOUS land takes up approximately 22 percent of the total land. These areas contain 80 percent of global biodiversity.

Many indigenous communities are fighting to protect their land from exploitative fossil fuel companies which in turn is a fight to protect us all.

But many of these people will be denied a seat at the table at Cop26.

Andrea Carmen, co-chair of the Facilitative Working Group for the Local Communities and Indigenous People's Platform recently said, "Indigenous peoples lives are on the front lines of climate change and I am concerned that so few of us will be able to be at the table in Glasgow during negotiations."

26 REASONS TO PROTEST AT COP 26

14

Even the air is toxic

AIR POLLUTION kills over 7 million people every year estimates The World Health Organisation (WHO).

Almost all of the world's population breathes air that exceeds the WHO safety limit. This leads to higher rates of lung cancer, asthma and other illnesses.

Half of children in New Delhi, India suffer irreversible lung damage.

More than 8 million people died worldwide in 2018 from fossil fuel pollution, significantly higher than previous research had indicated.

Air pollution from burning fossil fuels such as coal and petrol that year was responsible for about one in six deaths worldwide.

This is according to research from a group of universities including Harvard.

15

More extreme weather events

THE CLIMATE crisis is causing climate extremes from drought to floods and hurricanes to Tsunamis.

Hotter air and water worsens the frequency and intensity of hurricanes while also putting more pressure on water supplies during droughts.

In the US last year 47 people died as a result of hurricanes. In comparison 11 died ten years previously.

Droughts affect around 55 million people each year. The intensity of droughts is rising, posing a serious threat to livestock and crops in nearly every part of the world.

Water scarcity already impacts 40 percent of the world's population. By 2030, 700 million people could become displaced due to drought.

16

Market chaos causes damage

BANKS continue to lend hundreds of billions of pounds to the fossil fuel industry.

The rich are getting richer from the destruction of the planet.

We must overturn the system where profits push fossil fuel companies to keep searching and exploiting finite fuel resources and fight for a system that prioritises people, not profit.

17

To stop fracking

FOSSIL fuel companies will stop at nothing to extract oil. Fracking not only increases the number of fossil fuels to be burnt but can contaminate water, pollute land and trigger earthquakes.

An investigation by Stanford scientists found that fracking polluted water used by people who live near Pavillion in Wyoming, US.

18

Keep coal in the ground

COAL IS an incredibly dirty energy source but coal expansion continues as it's considered more profitable than renewable energy.

Australia approved three coal mine extensions last month and China is building more coal plants.

But as coal supplies empty we must fight for alternative clean energies rather than more exploitative coal extractions.

19

CO2 level out of control

CARBON dioxide (CO2) atmospheric levels reached a high of 417 parts per million (ppm) from February to March this year. Pre-industrial CO2 levels were around 278 ppm.

Fossil fuel use is the primary driver of CO2 emissions.

Humans have increased atmospheric CO2 concentration by 48 percent since 1760.

20

Global south suffering

THE CLIMATE crisis for many has already arrived. Those in the global south, with the smallest contribution to global emissions, will pay the largest price.

Extreme weather and climate change has already killed and displaced millions.

The system forces these countries to compete and divert investment from essential climate defence infrastructure.

21

More scorching summers

THIS year temperatures hit 54 degrees in large cities. This wasn't exclusive to places near the equator.

Canada's temperature peaked at 49.6 degrees, resulting in 486 deaths.

If carbon emissions double by 2050, temperatures would rise on average 2.4 degrees above pre-industrial levels creating more extreme heatwaves.

22

Overheating the planet

CAPITALISM has already caused 1.07 degrees of warming since 1850. 2016 to 2020 was the hottest five year period recorded since at least 1850.

This is already too warm and has melted 5,000 gigatons from ice sheets and approximately 85 percent of all documented natural disasters relate to increasing temperatures.

23

World's trees destroyed

ACCORDING TO the World Bank from 1990 to 2016, the world lost 502,000 square miles of woodland.

Around 46 percent of trees have been lost to deforestation mainly driven by mass scale logging firms.

And about 17 percent of the Amazon rainforest has been destroyed in just 50 years.

24

Sea levels will keep rising

SINCE 1900, sea levels have risen faster than in any preceding century.

Grenada's minister for climate and environment, Simon Stiell, said the Cop26 climate summit is key for the "survival" of many island nations.

If warming is limited to 1.5 degrees the average sea level will still rise between two and three metres.

25

Huge amount of ice is melting

THE LOSS of ice as a result of rising temperatures will greatly increase sea levels.

But as the ice melts, it also accelerates warming.

The mass of ice reflects heat from the Sun back out of Earth's atmosphere.

If we exceed 2 degrees of warming, Antarctica might lose its ice by 2060.

26

To disrupt their system

TO SAVE us from climate catastrophe we must smash apart the bosses' system.

We need a better democratically planned way of running the world that puts working class people in charge.

There can be no more useless conferences. To protest against Cop should be to protest against a rotten capitalist system.



Join marches for climate action, Sat 6 Nov **Glasgow** 12 noon, Kelvingrove Park, **London** 12 noon, Bank of England. Other cities at cop26coalition.org

WHAT WE STAND FOR

These are the core politics of the Socialist Workers Party.

INDEPENDENT WORKING CLASS ACTION

Under capitalism workers' labour creates all profit. A socialist society can only be constructed when the working class seizes control of the means of production and democratically plans how they are used.

REVOLUTION NOT REFORM

The present system cannot be patched up or reformed as the established Labour and trade union leaders say.

It has to be overthrown. Capitalism systematically degrades the natural world. Ending environmental crisis means creating a new society.

THERE IS NO PARLIAMENTARY ROAD

The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary cannot be taken over and used by the working class. They grew up under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers.

The working class needs an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates and a workers' militia.

At most parliamentary activity can be used to make propaganda against the present system.

Only the mass action of the workers themselves can destroy the system.

INTERNATIONALISM

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries.

We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries.

We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls.

We support the right of black people and other oppressed groups to organise their own defence. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The experience of Russia demonstrates that a socialist revolution cannot survive in isolation in one country.

In Russia the result was state capitalism, not socialism. In Eastern Europe and China a similar system was later established by Stalinist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

We are for real social, economic and political equality of women.

We are for an end to all forms of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people.

We oppose discrimination against disabled people including those who experience mental distress.

We defend the right of believers to practise their religion without state interference.

THE REVOLUTIONARY PARTY

To achieve socialism the most militant sections of the working class have to be organised into a revolutionary socialist party.

Such a party can only be built by activity in the mass organisations of the working class.

We have to prove in practice to other workers that reformist leaders and reformist ideas are opposed to their own interests.

We have to build a rank and file movement within the unions.

To join us, turn to page 16 or go to www.swp.org.uk or phone 020 7840 5602

Socialist Workers Party online meetings



The Socialist Workers Party continues to hold mostly online meetings during the pandemic. This ensures that there can still be collective and safe discussion, organising and actions. Occasionally branches will hold in-person meetings with precautions taken for a safe environment.

Most of the meetings will be held using the Zoom system. Download the Zoom app onto your phone or computer and just before the time given for your local meeting ask to "Join a meeting".

You can then enter the number printed on this page for the appropriate meeting. **The password for all meetings is 967537.**

Make sure you look at the SWP Facebook page [facebook.com/SocialistWorkersParty](https://www.facebook.com/SocialistWorkersParty) for news of national online meetings and other updates.

Politicians have failed repeatedly to tackle the climate crisis

PICTURE: EXTINCTION REBELLION

Climate catastrophe and the system

BRISTOL

Climate change, refugees and migration
Thu 28 Oct, 7.30pm
688-397-3148

KENT

Extreme weather and the climate—
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Why Sally Rooney's boycott matters so much to Israel

Rooney's refusal to let an Israeli publisher translate her new book provoked furore—revealing Israel's fear over Palestine solidarity, says **Nick Clark**

FOR A state that claims to have put this year's mass Palestinian revolt behind it, Israel's distress over something so seemingly small as a novel is revealing.

Its foreign ministry even went so far as to accuse bestselling author Sally Rooney of blocking "peace" in the Middle East.

Rooney's refusal to allow her latest novel to be translated into Hebrew and sold by an Israeli publishing company provoked a worldwide backlash.

Her decision was in solidarity with Palestinians. But, inevitably, supporters of Israel hit back at her with claims of antisemitism.

They said boycotting Israel was akin to targeting Jewish people.

It was about as unsubtle an attempt to conflate opposition to Israel with antisemitism as you can get.

Almost as unsubtle as the furore against Ben and Jerry's for refusing to sell Ice Cream in West Bank settlements.

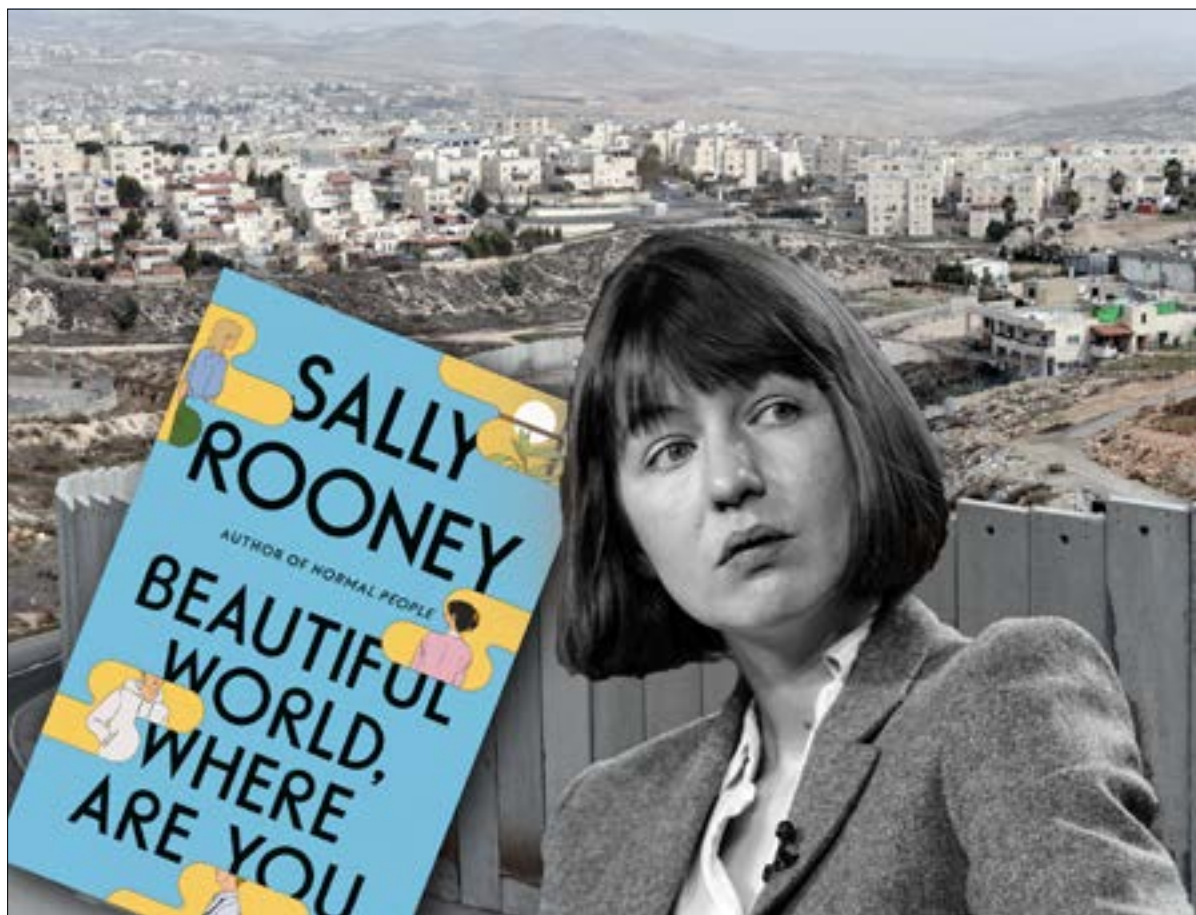
It's clearly nonsense. Despite the Israeli state's best efforts to say otherwise, Israel is not synonymous with Jewish identity.

But Rooney was pushed to make a statement of clarification. She was not boycotting the Hebrew language, she said—only the Israeli publishing company, Modan.

Apartheid

She said that, in line with the Palestinian-led Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign, "I simply do not feel it would be right for me under the present circumstances to accept a new contract with an Israeli company that does not publicly distance itself from apartheid and support the UN-stipulated rights of the Palestinian people."

"The Hebrew-language translation rights to my new novel are still available, and if I find a way to sell these rights that is compliant with the BDS movement's institutional boycott guidelines, I will be very pleased and



SALLY ROONEY has highlighted Israel's apartheid system

proud to do so." In truth, it would be perfectly legitimate if Rooney had decided not to sell her novel in Israel at all—just as some musicians and artists refuse to perform there.

The Israeli state uses culture to present a progressive face to the rest of the world.

It even has a "brand Israel" programme, which it has poured millions of pounds into, explicitly to replace stories of its occupation of Palestine.

This involves promoting its own films, musicians and artists, as well

as encouraging artists and singers to bring their performances, art and novels to Israel.

When it works, its success is celebrated as international acceptance of Israel as a "normal" state, rather than one sustained by racism and military occupation.

Often, this comes with undertones inviting comparisons between "liberal" Israel and the "backwards" Palestinians.

But when artists refuse to go along with this, they puncture the myth. Instead of covering up Israel's crimes, they draw attention to them.

Landmark

When Rooney explained her boycott, she pointed to two landmark reports from Human Rights Watch and B'Tselem accusing Israel of crimes of apartheid.

These, she said, "Confirmed what Palestinian human rights groups have long been saying."

"Israel's system of racial domination and segregation against Palestinians meets the definition of apartheid under international law."

This is exactly the sort of attention that Israel's politicians hate it. It's why the Israeli state puts so

much effort into countering BDS across the world—it even has its own dedicated anti-BDS ministry.

It's not that Israel is worried about the economic impact of a boycott.

The real "existential threat" is that BDS reflects growing awareness of Israel's racist system—and encourages solidarity with Palestinian resistance.

It's not a coincidence that Rooney's boycott—or for that matter, Ben and Jerry's—came after the Palestinian revolt earlier this year.

That revolt forced Israel's embedded racism into the spotlight, but also showed the world that Palestinians can resist.

It was the greatest crisis Israel has faced in years.

So it might seem odd that, after all that, Israel's supporters are so wound up about Rooney's boycott. But they've got good reason to be.

It's a sign that, in spite of everything, solidarity with Palestine is gaining ground.

MUSIC

ACTUALLY, YOU CAN

By Deerhoof

Out on Friday 22 October

A NEW Deerhoof album is always an exciting prospect.

Creating a soundscape from myriad genres, this band also deals in the very serious business of musical witticisms.

It's music that frequently makes you smile through its ingenuity. Deerhoof's music always deserves a close listening, using layers of sound and changes in pace and style.

Sometimes the band's music seems highly ambitious in its musical scope and conception. This was the case with last year's *Future Teenage Cave Artists* and was certainly true of the hugely enjoyable covers album also brought out in 2020, *Love-Lore*.

At other times the band just seem altogether less intense and like they're having a lot of fun. That's the story with the new album *Actually You Can*.

There are three stand-out



The new album from Deerhoof

tracks for me. *Be Unbarred* O Ye Gate of Hell opens the album with big entertaining anthemic guitar riffs.

The single *Scarcity* is Manufactured features joyful Mexican rhythms, while *Plant Thief* mixes cascading guitars with drum and bass stylings.

The gentle and tender *We Grew and We Are Astonished* is also worth a mention. Its base line is strongly reminiscent of the brilliant band Khruangbin. This was an album that was created in lockdown.

According to singer Satomi Matsuzaki, they had to pair back some of the arrangements so that they could make an album that would be playable live.

That inability to play together must be a source of huge frustration—this album's a real achievement.

With anti-capitalist sentiments never far from the surface there's a lot to love. I'm sure there must be something not to like about this band but I've yet to find it. Long live Deerhoof. **Alan Kenny**



Palestinians rose up in protest in May

On other pages...

Does criminalising hatred strike a blow against oppression? >>Page 15

Amilcar Cabral, a fighter for national independence and social change in one of Africa's smallest countries, became an international hero in the 1960s. He remains an inspiration for many African socialists today.

Cabral was born in Guinea, a Portuguese colony of West Africa, in 1924. His parents were middle class, part of a tiny group in a sea of desperate peasant poverty and colonial imposed backwardness.

Even by the 1950s, Cabral said 99 percent of the population could not read or write.

Some 60 percent of babies died before the age of one, 40 percent of the population suffered from sleeping sickness and almost everyone had some form of malaria.

There were never more than 11 doctors for the entire rural population, or one doctor for every 45,000 Africans.

Anyone who revolted faced murderous repression.

Yet by the time Cabral was murdered in 1973, his political party had led an armed struggle that shattered Portuguese rule and played a role in detonating revolution in Portugal itself.

Portugal controlled parts of West Africa from the 15th century, making it a centre for the blood and filth of the transatlantic slave trade. Later it became a colony without the slightest shred of democracy or hope of economic improvement for Africans.

Portugal also colonised Angola and Mozambique in southern Africa, Goa in India, and Brazil.

EXCELLING at school, Cabral was one of a very small number of students who were sent to Portugal to study. He arrived in a country that since the 1920s had been a dictatorship with fascist characteristics.

The colonialists hoped people such as Cabral would be added to the 1 percent of Guinean society known as “assimilado”—the assimilated. This educated layer was designed to give a loyal native face to Portuguese rule.

But several of these students became central parts of the anti-colonial revolt.

In Portugal Cabral came across the ideas of Karl Marx, or at least the Stalinist version pushed by the Portuguese Communist Party. This stressed unthinking support for the Soviet Union and state control from above.

Cabral was excited by Marx and other revolutionary writing. But the Communist

Party refused to support freedom for the African colonies on the racist grounds that Africans were too backward to run their affairs. Cabral was repulsed by this.

Returning to Guinea, Cabral launched his African Party for the Independence of Guinea and Cape Verde (PAIGC) group with six people.

He was realistic about its roots, saying, “We were just a group of petty bourgeois who were driven by the reality of life in Guinea to try and do something.” At first they hoped for

launched a powerful strike over pay. When the police arrived to attack them, workers barricaded entrances and armed themselves with harpoons.

The police then carried out a bloody assault, shooting and throwing grenades. They killed up to 50 people.

The PAIGC reacted to what became known as the Pídjiguiti massacre by abandoning agitation among workers and turning to armed struggle. This shaped everything that followed.

ARMED resistance was certainly justifiable. But not combining it with organising workers as a class intensified all the tendencies to see the battle as about delivering freedom for people rather than by the people.

Armed resistance faced massive odds.

Despite much international condemnation of Portugal's brutal colonialism, as a member of Nato, it was sustained by Western backing.

The British Tory government had a particularly despicable position. It said it would stop sales of weapons to Portugal that are used to repress Africans but would continue sales for Portugal's domestic defence.

There was of course no mechanism for ensuring the arms bought apparently for keeping the Russians out of Lisbon was not used to slaughter peasants around Bissau.

But through courageous resistance, the PAIGC gradually forced back the imperialists. Within a few years 10,000 guerrilla fighters confronted 35,000 Portuguese troops. The PAIGC forces withstood bombings and napalm attacks.

And increasingly the PAIGC won, beating the Portuguese in set piece battles as well as raids and ambushes.

THE revolutionaries grew their popularity by building schools, hospitals and cheap food centres in the areas they liberated.

The PAIGC argued for women's rights, against tribalism and tried to raise the cultural level of the peasantry.

It also worked to win over the Portuguese forces, appealing for a common struggle against the dictatorship in Lisbon.

Along with revolts in its other African colonies, Guinea became “Portugal's Vietnam”.

The colonial was becoming increasingly unpopular as young men were conscripted for four years, including two years in Africa.

The PAIGC was sustained by arms supplies and training from the state capitalist countries of Cuba, Russia and China who saw it as a way to extend their influence in Africa. This further developed the moves towards

seeing Russian or China as the model of development.

It was a vision of society driven by a group that ruled on behalf of the masses—and increasingly separated themselves from them.

In the early days of the PAIGC, Cabral argued intellectuals must commit “class suicide” and adopt the standpoint of the working class.

Now his party tried to create activists “from the people employed in commerce and other wage-earners, and even some peasants.

This was so they could acquire what you might call a working class mentality.

“You may think this is absurd—in order for there to be a working class mentality, the material conditions of the working class should exist,” said Cabral.

“In fact we managed to inculcate these ideas into a large number of people—the kind of ideas which there would be if there were a working class.” This “working class revolution without a working class” was doomed.

Cabral himself said, “There are only two possible paths for an independent nation—to return to imperialist domination (neo-colonialism, capitalism, state capitalism), or to take the way of socialism.”

Socialism was not possible in a single country such as Russia, even after a successful workers' revolution. How even less possible was socialism built in a country of 750,000 peasants that had won national freedom through armed struggle?

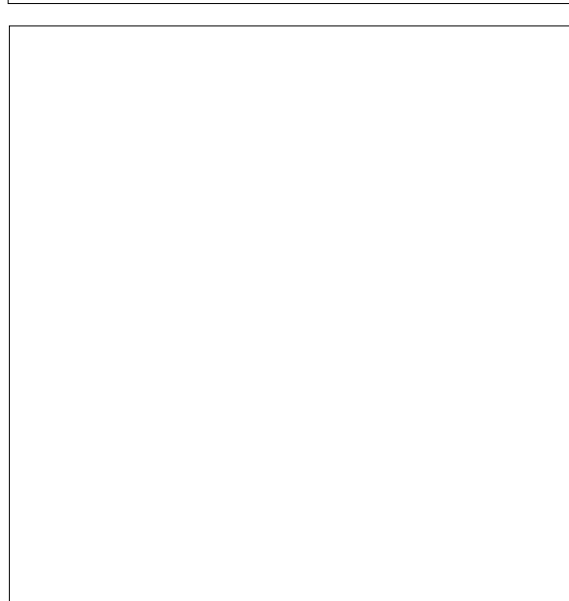
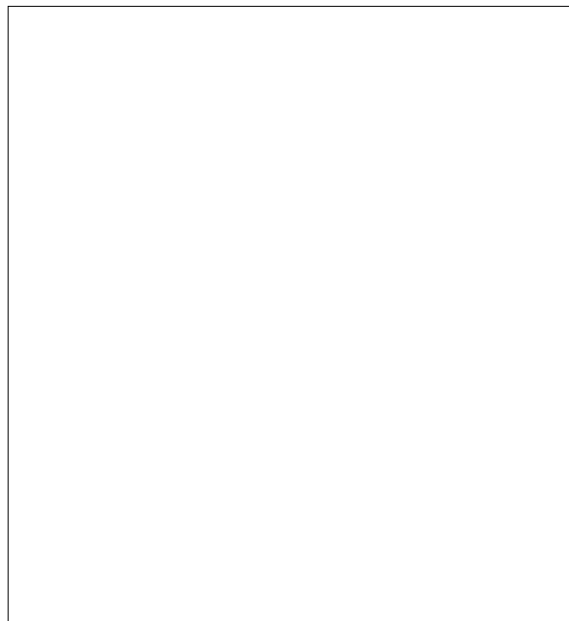
CABRAL DID not live to see the end of colonialism. He was murdered in 1973 by rivals in the PAIGC, possibly with the involvement of pro-Portuguese traitors.

But a year later a revolution erupted in Portugal itself. Many of the officers involved in the movement acknowledged the influence of Cabral on their thinking.

This revolution ended Portugal's empire and the independence of Guinea-Bissau was secure.

After Portugal withdrew, Cabral's brother Luiz tried to implement a programme of development and improvements for ordinary people.

This involved nationalising key



Portuguese plane brought down by PAIGC fighters (top). PICTURE: ROEL COUTINHO

Raising the flag after independence (above). PICTURE: JOÃO CARVALHO

industries and extending the welfare services in the liberated areas.

But, forced to rely on their resources and at a time of world economic downturn, this could be financed only by taxing the peasantry more heavily.

The peasants turned against the PAIGC which became more centralised and repressive.

In 1980 the military removed Luis in a coup—the first of nine coups or attempted coups—and Joao Vieira introduced a free market government. Its policies were dictated by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Amilcar Cabral is inspiring because of his determination to struggle against inequality, not just to denounce it.

Winning his vision of the world will require an international working class revolution.

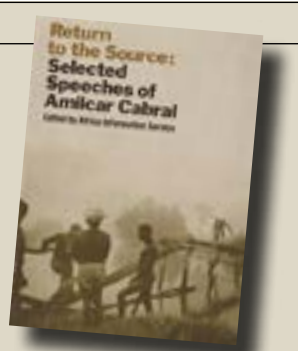
READ MORE

● **Works of Amilcar Cabral on Marxists.org** bit.ly/CabralSW

● **No Fist Is Big Enough to Hide the Sky: The Liberation of Guinea-Bissau and Cape Verde, 1963-74** by Basil Davidson £18.99

● **Return to the Source: Selected Speeches of Amilcar Cabral** £11.15

Available at Bookmarks, the socialist bookshop. Phone 020 7637 1848 or go to www.bookmarksbookshop.co.uk



“ ”

COMMENT

Does criminalising hatred strike a blow to oppression?

Racists, sexists and homophobes have to be challenged, but the state won't help us, says **Isabel Ringrose**

REPORTED HATE crimes have risen by 9 percent to more than 124,000 since the start of the pandemic in England and Wales.

This figure is an all-time high, and the number of hate crimes recorded by police has doubled in five years. It shows that oppression is real and plays out in violent forms.

But why is hate on the rise, and is expanding what constitutes a hate crime the solution?

A hate crime is defined as “any criminal offence which is perceived, by the victim or any other person, to be motivated by hostility or prejudice towards someone based on a personal characteristic”.

Hate crimes motivated by race make up nearly three-quarters of the total number of crimes. That's an increase of 12 percent in the year ending March 2021.

Homophobic hate crimes increased by 7 percent and crimes based on transgender identity by 3 percent.

Disability hate crimes increased by 9 percent.

Labelling something a “hate crime” comes from wanting abuse people face to be taken seriously. And it is important to know how widespread oppression is.

Limitations

In reality, defining hate crimes has its limitations. Hate crimes individualise oppressive behaviour and place the sole reason behind bigoted views on the person holding them.

A sexist is responsible for how he behaves—and has to be confronted, challenged or made accountable for his ideas or actions. But sexist ideas don't develop in people's heads out of nowhere.

“Hate” doesn't manifest itself arbitrarily or inexplicably. There's an ideological root—oppressive ideas come from the top.

POLICE POWERS are not the solution

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

Oppression is embedded in the capitalist system we live in and pumped out by the state.

According to the Home Office, there have been “short-term genuine rises in hate crime following certain trigger events”.

Some say the rise in racially aggravated crimes is due to backlash after the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement, particularly from the far right.

The state's reaction to BLM, from newspapers denouncing protesters to Tory laws against pulling down statues of slavers, promotes hostility.

A Brexit campaign centred on kicking people out of Britain has justified racism towards immigrants.

State repression of trans people's ability to self-identify, or Donald Trump's racism towards east Asians during the pandemic, leads to violence.

Some women's rights activists now want hate crimes based on sex and gender included in the data.

Campaigners argue misogyny is one of the “root causes” of violence

against women. But Boris Johnson has ruled out changing the law. The Tories' unwillingness to act isn't surprising—the safety of women isn't their priority.

It's true that violence against women is carried out mostly by men because of sexism. But sexism has a much wider and systemic cause than just men hating women.

The end solution to this can't be more police powers, court cases, reform of existing legal definitions and longer prison sentences.

Target

Although it's important the state recognises that certain characteristics make people more of a target, it shouldn't be relied on to remedy this. The state is not on our side.

More laws don't change the way the system runs or solve why oppression exists in the first place.

Race hate crimes will get an offender longer in prison, but the justice system still disproportionately locks up black people.

For women, making cat-calling a specific hate crime won't mean the police will take sexism more seriously.

It won't stop cops being institutionally sexist and failing women in cases of violence or harassment.

The radicalism that came out of BLM and women's movement that erupted after the murder of Sarah Everard must be acted on.

Challenging the systemic nature of oppression is what will win the greatest changes.

“ ”

The solution can't be more police powers and longer prison time

THE REVOLUTIONARY and African anti-colonial leader, Amilcar Cabral

AMILCAR CABRAL ARMED STRUGGLE AND NATIONAL LIBERATION

As we celebrate Black History Month, the story of Amilcar Cabral, leader of the Guinean resistance against colonialism, offers inspiration but also lessons about the limitations of socialism from above, writes **Charlie Kimber**

“ ”

10,000 guerilla fighters confronted 35,000 troops

A PAIGC soldier

Tear gas repression that is made in Britain

by NICK CLARK

THE BRITISH government has authorised sales of tear gas to several repressive states over more than a decade, new research reveals.

At least six of them are states that the government itself says have committed human rights violations.

The monitoring organisation Action On Armed Violence (AOAV) found the government approved tear gas sales to Bangladesh, Bahrain, Egypt, Maldives, Saudi Arabia and Sri Lanka.

These are all on the Human Rights Priorities List, which the British government says are “countries where we are particularly concerned about human rights issues.”

In addition, the government has also granted tear gas sales to the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan and Oman.

All of these have crushed demonstrations and revolts over the past decade—including uprisings during the Arab Spring of 2011.

Police in Oman likely used British-made tear gas against protesters as recently as

BAHRAIN'S COPS using tear gas against protesters

May this year. Photographs posted to social media showed British arms firm PW Defence Ltd had made the tear gas grenades that cops used against people protesting over unemployment.

Campaign Against the Arms Trade says Britain has licensed more than £16 million worth of tear gas to Oman since 2015. AOAV says Britain

has approved 20 tear gas sales to Oman since 2008—making the country the fourth most frequent buyer.

Oman is listed as a priority market by the British government.

The government has also approved multiple sales to the UAE, Bahrain, Kuwait, Jordan and Oman despite it being used for internal repression.

Britain reviewed sales to Bahrain after British-made tear gas was used to crack down on protesters who had joined the uprisings across the Middle East in 2011.

A report the following year found that at least 13 people died as a direct result of the Bahraini authorities’ use of tear gas.

Saudi Arabia, which

Britain has sold tear gas to, also used it to crush protests.

Yet, despite the review, Britain approved four more licences for tear gas ammunition to Bahrain, in 2013, 2014, 2015 and 2018. Bahrain again used tear gas on civilians to repress anti-corruption protests in 2015.

The governments of Jordan and Kuwait have also

used tear gas to crush protests during the period covered by AOAV’s report.

The report shows how Britain is perfectly willing to ignore—and even facilitate—repression and human rights abuses to help its allies.

The government’s own rules say arms licences should not be granted “if there is a clear risk the items might be used for internal repression”.

And the Tories banned sales of tear gas” to China following protests in Hong Kong in 2019.

Partner

But Britain relies on its arms industry to bolster its role as the US’s junior partner in the Middle East.

That means selling weapons to brutal dictatorships.

Murray Jones, the author of the AOAV report, said, “The case of Hong Kong shows that they do have the mechanisms to prevent British-made weapons being used for internal repression.

“So the government’s inaction on sales to the UAE, Bahrain, Jordan, Kuwait and Oman becomes even harder to defend.”

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Rising imperialist tensions and war games over Taiwan

With agitation growing between the US and China over Taiwan, **Simon Basketter** explores how US intervention and rival imperialisms are at the root of the current dangerous crisis

WARSHIPS HAVE been playing war games in waters east of Taiwan. The vessels were from the US, Japan, Britain, Canada, the Netherlands and New Zealand.

Chinese warplanes weren't asked to play, but they still joined in and apparently simulated attacks on some of those vessels.

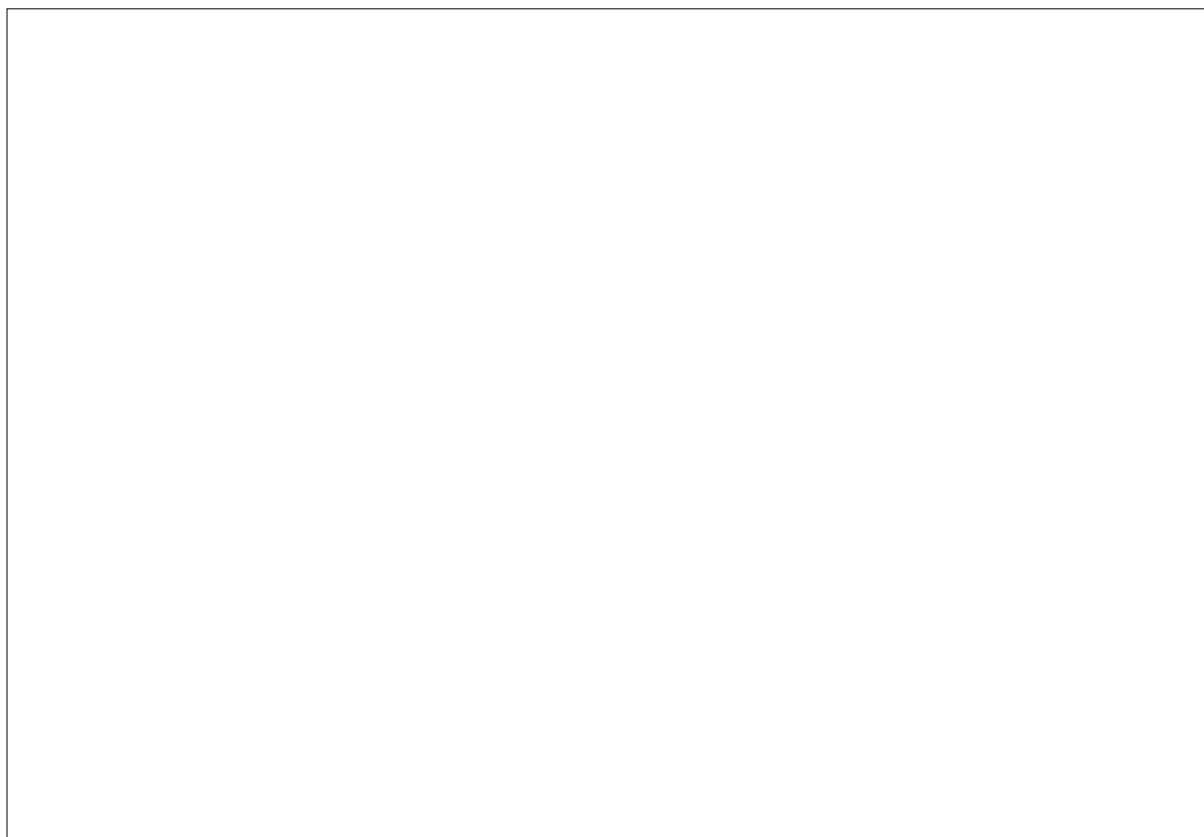
It was the latest escalation in a year of rising tensions over Taiwan, an island about 100 miles east of China. The situation, said Taiwan's defence minister Chiu Kuo-cheng, is the most dangerous it's been in 40 years.

Xi Jinping, China's president, said that China has the resolve to achieve "complete reunification" between the two countries.

Taiwan's president Tsai Ing-wen said for her part that the island should "resist annexation or encroachment upon our sovereignty".

US president Joe Biden's recent tour of Europe saw the G7 and Nato summits shore up the US's allies for a tough approach to the growth of China.

The CIA has announced a new China Mission Center, describing China as "the most important geopolitical threat we face in the 21st century".



Taiwan's president Tsai Ing-wen is pushing for independence

Diplomatic

The agreement by the US and Britain to supply Australia with nuclear submarines is part of this too. As is the continuing diplomatic bluster over the islands in the South China Sea, and a new US trade agreement with Taiwan.

China is firmly ensuring the domination of its sphere of influence to keep up its economic growth against push back from the US and its allies.

There are countervailing pressures.

On the economic side between the US and China there is huge interdependence as well as competition.

A few business spies have been swapped and trade talks rumble on. They are currently negotiating phase two of a trade deal.

It essentially covers who makes the most from importing and exporting to the other. This is based on deciding how high tariffs will be on Chinese goods and how much US stuff China

must import. The US wants to hold back the Chinese economy while relying on it at the same time.

Worried about the prospect of war hitting profits, the bosses' Financial Times newspaper said, "Any war would overturn a global order under which Taiwan and China have both prospered mightily, to their own benefit and that of their trading partners."

"Beijing and Washington would emerge from such a conflict to a world

riven into hostile blocs. Whoever the 'winner', all would lose. The choice across the Taiwan Strait is between a tolerable status quo and a disastrous conflict."

Maintaining a state of uncertainty is long term US policy—known as "strategic ambiguity". Essentially "we might be prepared to go to war, or we might not".

And the real problem with war games is they can stop being games.

Taiwan's history of anti-Communism and civil war

IN 1895, Japan won a war and the Chinese government ceded Taiwan to it. Then in 1911 popular uprisings in China forced out the monarchy.

The new Republic of China was led by the nationalist Kuomintang (KMT).

Josef Stalin in Russia insisted the Communists must form an alliance with the KMT to liberate the country from foreign influence.

But after it got what it wanted, the KMT turned on the Communists leading to thousands being

massacred. That meant a protracted civil war which began in 1928.

But from 1937 the two forces allied against Japan, which occupied large parts of China.

Communist forces then fought the Republic of China again, now run by General Chiang Kai-shek. After World War Two the KMT was beaten back by Mao Zedong's Communist armies.

Chiang Kai-shek's troops fled to Taiwan in 1949 and, with the backing of the US and Britain, took charge. This group



Chiang Kai-shek and Mao Zedong

is often referred to as the Mainland Chinese and made up 1.5 million people.

They accounted for 14 percent of the population and completely dominated Taiwan's politics.

Martial law was declared in Taiwan in May 1949 and was only repealed in 1987.

During this White Terror, 140,000 people were imprisoned and around 4,000 executed for being perceived as pro-Communist.

One writer, for instance, was imprisoned because

of their translation of a Popeye comic.

Chiang's son Chiang Ching-kuo followed him into office, and after protests began a slow process of democratisation.

The first non-KMT president was elected in 2000.

The US resumed formal relations with Taiwan under Donald Trump.

Current president Joe Biden has said US commitment to Taiwan is "rock solid". In reality they never broke off real relations in the first place.

Sovereignty based on armed power

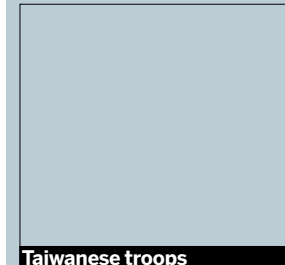
CHINA regards Taiwan as a breakaway province. Taiwan's leaders say it is a sovereign state.

Taiwan has 300,000 active troops in its armed forces to prove the point.

Chiang Kai-shek's Republic of China (ROC) government in Taiwan claimed to represent the whole of China, which it said it intended to re-occupy.

It held China's seat on the United Nations Security Council and was recognised by many Western nations as the Chinese government.

But in 1971, the UN



Taiwanese troops

switched diplomatic recognition to Beijing.

Since then the number of countries that recognise the ROC government diplomatically has fallen drastically to about 15.

Those that don't include the US and Britain who prefer to keep diplomatic ties with China.

Taiwan's president Tsai Ing-wen leads the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP).

It favours eventual independence for Taiwan. Its competitor the Kuomintang favours eventual re-unification.

While Taiwan is clearly part of China, in truth the decision over its future currently rests with the interplay of imperialist powers.

EDUCATION



STRIKERS AT City and Islington college, in north London

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

College strikes over pay have put workers on the front foot

by SOPHIE SQUIRE

WORKERS AT five colleges in London and Liverpool struck for a third week last week and already strikes have forced the bosses to make concessions.

Lively picket lines, which usually included specially written strike songs, continued from Monday of this week.

The colleges still on strike included City of Liverpool College, Lambeth College, and colleges part of the Capital City College Group (CCCG).

One striker who works at City and Islington College (Candi) told Socialist Worker that “bullying and increased workloads which feels like bullying” had pushed her to strike.

“I taught across two different curriculums, GCSE and English for speakers of other languages (Esol).”

“I was effectively bullied out of teaching GCSE.”

They added that workload went up notably in the last two years when two heads of departments left the college.

Emily, who also works at City and

Islington College, said that it is becoming increasingly difficult to keep going despite loving her job. “The main issue is that we’re not supported by managers at all. And really they are completely useless.

“There’s a whole layer of middle management that I couldn’t tell you what they do, well apart from harass us and receive big wage packets.”

A branch officer from the Candi branch of the UCU also pointed to how conditions are worsening at the college.

“Recently 12 people at the college have been made redundant, and they haven’t been replaced.

Cut

“Esol courses have been cut, and teaching access courses have been cut down to only three courses at our college.

“Access courses are desperately needed to train the next generation who will work in schools and FE colleges.

“So this isn’t just a fight for our jobs but the future of the education sector” they added.

Over 200 CCCG strikers in London met

for a mass meeting on Wednesday of last week to discuss where next for the dispute.

Workers at the meeting wanted to keep on striking until their demands were met. The meeting was also an opportunity to show solidarity with the ongoing strikes at the Royal College of Art.

Strong pickets and large rallies online and outside colleges have kept the strike alive these past three weeks.

Further strikes have the potential to be even stronger as NEU union members at the Islington Sixth form college will also be heading to pickets.

Workers at Croydon college in south London—who had been on strike for two consecutive weeks—called off further strikes after a concession from management.

Bosses agreed to a 2 percent increase for most workers, and 5.3 percent for the lowest paid.

But 2 percent is still below inflation—which means it is still effectively a pay cut.

The concession shows that strikes can force bosses to put their hands in their pockets. Only more of them can win workers’ demands for a proper pay rise.

DUNDEE

Two more weeks of action

LOW PAID workers who are members of three unions at Dundee University were set to strike from Monday and Tuesday of next week.

Members of Unite, Unison and the UCU unions are fighting over pensions. Members of Unite were set to strike for

two weeks from Monday. Unison members in three departments were also set to strike for two weeks.

Unison members already struck earlier this month and were joined by a small number of UCU members who were on the same local pension scheme.

UNIVERSITY OF ARTS LONDON

Cleaners vote to fight on

OUTSOURCED cleaning workers at the University of the Arts London (UAL) have voted to strike again. They are demanding the same terms and conditions as those directly employed by the university.

As it currently stands the

outsourced cleaners don’t get access to sick pay or other benefits.

The members of the GMB union took to picket lines for a week earlier this month but so far the bosses haven’t listened to their demands.

VICTIMISATION

NEU union members rally in Redbridge, east London

Oaks Park school workers rally against rep’s sacking

TEACHERS AND support staff at Oaks Park High School in Redbridge, east London, remain “determined and resolute” in their fight against victimisation and bullying from the school’s senior management.

Over 50 strikers and supporters gathered for the third time at Redbridge town hall on Saturday.

They were protesting against the Labour council’s decision to back management and strike breaking.

Banners read, “Save Oaks Park School,” and protesters chanted, “What’s disgusting? Union busting.”

Last academic year, at the height of the pandemic, NEU union rep Keiran Mahon encouraged other workers to use Section 44 of the Employment Rights Act to ensure their safety.

Senior management then sacked him in May.

Venda Premkumar, secretary of Redbridge NEU, told Socialist Worker, “We are striking for a positive change. We want

Redbridge council to resolve this dispute.

“The dispute has already lasted over four months and union members have taken 20 days of strikes.

“It’s time to end this and put teachers where they want to be, back in the classroom.

“The strikers are determined and resolute in their fight for what’s right.”

The lively protest featured a Twitter storm directed at the council and NEU members were petitioning local people.

One former Oaks Park student signed the petition and alleged that he witnessed bullying from senior members of staff.

NEU members from Hackney and Newham branches also joined the rally in solidarity with the strikers.

NEU members at Oaks Park were set to return to picket lines from Tuesday to Thursday of this week—and they then plan a further 12 days of action in November. **Sam Ord**

UNIVERSITIES

Ballots begin over pensions and conditions at universities

WORKERS IN universities across Britain are voting on whether to strike over cuts to their pension scheme, unsafe workloads, casualisation and against inequalities.

The ballot, by UCU union members, began on Monday of this week. Activists protested outside the Universities & Colleges Employers Association on Monday morning to announce the start of the ballot.

Protesters held placards that highlighted the pay disparity faced by women, black and disabled people in the university sector.

Workers at 152 institutions will be balloted over two separate disputes. The first is against cuts by bosses body Universities UK to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS).

Cuts to the USS scheme could mean that some

workers could face as much as a 35 percent cut to their pensions.

The second dispute, known as the “four fights”, is over equal pay, casual contracts, workload and a real-term pay rise.

Workers at some universities are only balloting on one of these disputes, while others will be balloted for both.

Currently, workers at

six institutions are being balloted over USS only, 78 will be balloted over the four fights and 68 will receive two ballots over both disputes. Voting is set to end on Thursday 4 November.

After years of pay and pension cuts coupled with the impact of the continued attacks on the university sector, this ballot is an opportunity for workers to get their voices heard.

REFUSE

Bin workers refuse to be treated like rubbish

by JEANNIE ROBINSON and JAMES EADEN

“WE ARE not just arms and legs, we’re not ten a penny” were some of the chants ringing out on the foggy picket line at the Serco Derbyshire Dales refuse depot.

Over 40 GMB union members have held two days of rock-solid strikes as part of their campaign for pay justice.

Outsourcer Serco, which has made mega profits over the last 18 months, on the back of the pandemic, is offering a pay deal worth 1.75 percent. That’s a real terms pay cut—and the strikers have rightly rejected it.

The 17p an hour extra is insulting for key workers who worked right through the dispute.

Control

Workers are angry, not just over pay but with the bullying attitude of managers.

One striker said the strength of this action will have taught managers that workers aren’t machines—they have brains too.

Bosses know that due to labour shortages drivers are



DETERMINED AT Derbyshire Dales

leaving for better-paid work and they are hard to replace.

Workers are determined that if their company doesn’t shift they will be out on strike again.

They were excited by the solidarity messages from other refuse workers taking on Serco in Sandwell and Bexley.

Stagecoach bus drivers in the area called off a proposed strike because they won 4.5 percent. Their RMT union

sent a message of solidarity to the picket line.

Readers of Socialist Worker have posted solidarity messages on their bins.

■ **REFUSE WORKERS** for City Clean at Brighton and Hove council have won a new deal after two week’s of strikes over conditions and unannounced changes to working schedules.

The GMB union is reported to have negotiated not only

a pay increase for the whole of the City Clean workforce—drivers, loaders and street cleaning crews—but also around 1,000 low paid workers across the city.

Within this group the increase could equate to an extra £1,000 a year for those at the bottom of the pay scale. It is expected to affect a predominantly female workforce across adult social care, schools and admin.

The GMB said the deal answered all the issues it had raised, and presented the deal to members on Monday who agreed to it.

The deal has to be ratified by the council. If it is the union will halt the strikes.

The City Clean dispute started as one over conditions, not pay, although their pay is bad.

The central issues were changes to rosters, arbitrary reorganisation of the rounds, staff shortages, and a general lack of respect for the workforce and their union.

Reports in the Argus local newspaper and the BBC barely made reference to these issues.

But they were certainly at the top of workers’ complaints.

Thanks to Steve Guy

WAREHOUSES

Clarks shoe workers want to give bosses the boot

A FANTASTIC solidarity day took place on the Clarks workers’ picket line in Street in Somerset.

Trade unionists from around Britain joined the 100 workers from the Community union who are on all out strike.

The famous shoe company is firing and rehiring its warehouse workers and cutting their pay from £11 per hour to £9.50.

When workers told the boss they would not be able to pay their mortgages he told them to “change your lifestyle”.

Trevor Stephens, who has worked at the warehouse for 17 years, said, “Clarks are bullying us into accepting lower wages. It is destroying lives. It is

destroying families.”

Clarks was taken over by private equity firm, LionRock Capital, in March

Trade union banners from the Unite and FBU unions and four different trades councils were at the solidarity day.

They included Mendip trades council which organised the event.

There was a very good delegation from Somerset County Union branch. Labour Party banners were also evident and the South West TUC regional secretary was present.

● Messages of support to Dan Francois dfrancois@community-tu.org or 0776 0161952 and Trevor Stephens urban_bushman@hotmail.co.uk

POSTAL WORKERS

Fight over sack in Llanelli

POSTAL WORKERS in the CWU union in Llanelli, South Wales, struck on Wednesday of last week to support sacked worker Gary Evans. The CWU is demanding his reinstatement.

The strength of feeling was shown by the strike vote—over 98 percent voting for action with a turnout of 87 percent.

CWU members held a 24-hour rolling picket which was well supported by other CWU branches and two Unison branches in Swansea and Carmarthen. Deliveries to the office

were turned away and only management, as expected, crossed the picket line.

The union—and Gary Evans personally—have been encouraged by all the messages of support.

Another strike is now planned for Thursday of next week.

This is an important battle which the CWU must win to protect workers from the arbitrary and unjustified actions of Royal Mail management.

● Messages of support can be sent to c.w.u@btconnect.com **Matthew Shepherd**

FOOD

Escalate strikes to eat Weetabix for breakfast

WEETABIX STRIKERS in Northamptonshire remain solid in their action against the company’s fire and rehire threats that will see some lose up to £5,000 a year.

The company is using agency staff to work around the impact of the strike. Yet the striking engineers are still having an effect.

A job that would take the engineers 30 minutes is taking the agency workers close to 12 hours.

This has slowed down and even stopped production.

But the impact of the strike is being undermined. The engineers strike for two days a week.

When they return to work, they undo the effects of their own action.

And back in work they are working harder than

before with the extra load. Strikers are discussing the need to escalate the action. Meanwhile Unite is developing a “leverage plan”.

The key is to move to all out indefinite strike.

As soon as they do this the pressure on Weetabix will escalate massively.

Other Unite branches should also donate to back the strikers.

● Cheques payable to Unite East Midlands Region.

Indicate on the back of the cheque that the donation is for Weetabix Hardship Fund. Send to Finance Department Riverside Building, Friars Mill, 102 Bath Lane, Leicester, LE3 5BJ. Or pay directly to Unite East Midlands: Sort Code: 60-83-01 Account Number: 20173975. Email **Sean**.

Kettle@unitehethunion.org with messages of support

ARMS TRADE

Arms fair protest

AROUND 150 people attended an early morning protest march on Tuesday of last week against the AOC Electronic Warfare arms fair.

It was held at the council-owned Liverpool Exhibition Centre.

Two Palestine Action activists managed to avoid a large police presence and occupied the roof of the centre.

There is widespread anger at the Labour-controlled council allowing this event to take place.

There has been widespread opposition to the event across the city and a number of large demonstrations took place in the build up to last week’s protests.

Many activists from the Liverpool Against The Arms Fair campaign believe that pressure needs to be kept on the council to ensure no future arms fairs take place in the city.

John Carr

BUS DRIVERS

Hold up at Stagecoach

BUS DRIVERS working for Stagecoach in South Wales were set to strike over pay from Tuesday this week—and more action is planned.

Bosses have denied drivers at the Cwmbran, Brynmawr and Blackwood depots their demand for a pay rise to £10.50 an hour.

The company also maintained that cuts to sick pay and paid breaks—and the introduction of reduced new starter rates—would be required to achieve even a rate of £10.10 per hour.

Further strikes are scheduled for 29 and 30 October, 1 November until 6 November, 8 November, 9 November and 12 November.

Stagecoach made a profit of £58.4 million last year.

■ **AROUND 1,000 bus drivers** for Stagecoach in Manchester are set to strike over pay on Tuesday 26 October with another strike on 29 October.

ROUND-UP

WORKERS AT Evonik, a Manchester chemicals site, are striking over pay. Around 25 production and warehouse operatives at the site want more than a below-inflation 1.5 percent pay offer.

Strikes began on Monday, and were set to continue on Saturday and Sunday as well as 12, 13 and 14 November.

The site in Clayton produces curing agents for epoxy resins, catalysts for polyurethane foam and additives used in marine, civil engineering, construction and automotive industries.

■ **UNITE UNION** members at Goodfish in St Asaph, north Wales begin strikes on Monday over a two year pay freeze.

Over 50 workers at the plant, which makes PVC mouldings, have been affected by the freeze.

■ **STRIKES AT** bottle makers Alpla UK in Wigan have been postponed to allow workers to vote on an improved offer by the company. The

150 Unite union members were due to begin two months of discontinuous strikes on Wednesday.

If the offer is rejected, two 48-hour strikes scheduled for 4 and 16 November will go ahead.

■ **WORKERS AT** Mayhew, an animal charity in north west London, are being consulted on whether to hold an industrial action ballot with the option to strike.

Unite union members say that bosses’ plans could lead to a 40 percent reduction in vet nurses, a 50 percent cut in cleaning hours and 75 percent cut in reception staff.

■ **STRIKES PLANNED** for the Manchester Metrolink tram system have been called off after workers accepted an improved pay offer.

It is for 3 percent backdated to January 2021 and a further three per cent or the RPI inflation rate, whichever is the higher, from January 2022.

That’s better than the original, but this year’s deal is lower than inflation.

IT'S RIGHT TO STRIKE DURING COP26 TALKS

by SOPHIE SQUIRE

GROUPS OF workers are preparing to strike in Glasgow during the Cop26 international climate conference. They are right to do so.

Workers' action is the key to winning fundamental change, and strikes can highlight that power.

Scotrail workers in the RMT union are set to strike from 1-12 November for pay justice and equality.

Caledonian Sleeper staff will join them.

And up to 1,500 Glasgow city council workers including refuse workers, school cooks and janitors in the GMB union will also strike.

Rubbish

Uncollected rubbish and transport disruption will shame the Tories and the Scottish National Party (SNP) as they roll out the red carpet for world leaders and bosses.

Chris Mitchell, GMB Glasgow cleansing convenor, said this was part of the strategy to win for Glasgow city council workers.

"The eyes of the world



RAIL WORKERS joined school strikers' climate protests in 2019

PICTURE: GUY SMALLMAN

will be on Glasgow during Cop26, and our politicians now have a choice" he said.

"Will they fairly reward the frontline workers who got the country through the pandemic, or will they risk embarrassing the city and the country on an international stage?"

The prospect of both

strikes has shaken those at the top.

Scotland's SNP transport minister Graeme Dey said that he had "no idea" why Scotrail workers were planning to strike during in Cop26.

He also demanded that the members of the RMT should hold another vote.

He should be in no doubt why the strikes are taking place. They have been going on for nearly seven months over basic issues of pay and conditions.

And the workers have overcome all the obstacles of the anti-union laws.

It's a disgrace that SNP ministers are attacking

workers rather than the privatised rail bosses.

It is right for these—and any other—disputes to use the conference itself as leverage.

But linking strikes with the fight against the climate crisis is essential.

Striking during Cop26 is an opportunity for workers

to win better conditions and pay. It is a chance to rage against the inaction of world leaders and the bosses.

It would send a strong message if rail workers announced that they were not only striking for their jobs but also raising demands for a fully nationalised and greener transport system.

Trade union leaders must be quicker to make these links.

It would also be wrong for unions to one day call strikes during Cop26 and the next advocate for preserving the fossil fuel industry and building nuclear power stations.

That's what the GMB union leaders do.

If unions are serious about cutting emissions and fighting climate breakdown, throwing their whole weight behind protests around Cop26 is essential.

And workers across Britain should organise actions on 5 November, the day of the next school strike.

Join marches on Sat 6 Nov
Glasgow 12 noon, Kelvingrove Park.
London 12 noon, Bank of England.
Other cities at cop26coalition.org

Biden dumps plans, and the fossil fuel criminals take stalls at conference

US PRESIDENT Joe Biden's claims that he will implement wide-ranging climate reforms are already falling apart.

After opposition from Democrat West Virginia state senator Joe Manchin a programme to encourage bosses to replace fossil fuel burning plants with renewables is likely to be scrapped.

"This is absolutely the most important climate policy in the package," said Leah Stokes, an expert on climate policy, who has been advising Senate Democrats on how to craft the programme. "We fundamentally need

it to meet our climate goals. That's just the reality. And now we can't. So this is pretty sad."

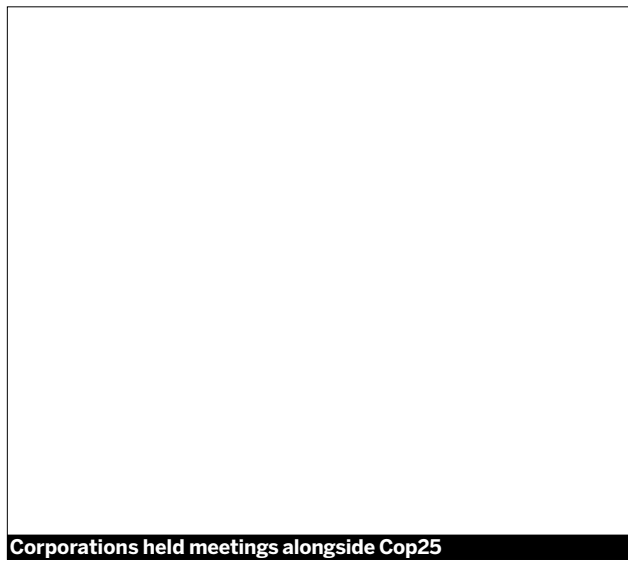
Manchin backs

West Virginia's coal companies—and has received more donations from the oil and gas industry than any other senator.

Manchin isn't the only figure looking to keep raking in the profits.

The Cop26 conference floor will see corporations furiously compete for who can greenwash the best after paying millions to sponsor the event.

The summit has 11 major sponsors including



Corporations held meetings alongside Cop25

energy giants Hitachi, National Grid, Scottish Power and SSE, US tech titan Microsoft, media giant Sky and major firms NatWest, Reckitt, Sainsbury's and Unilever.

Other lower tier "partners" include the car maker Jaguar Land Rover and the furniture retailer Ikea.

According to the organisers of Cop26, these corporations will be able to promote their brands at the conference's "green zone".

And despite the assurances by world leaders that cutting emissions will be a

priority, several energy companies reliant on fossil fuels have also been invited.

But these energy companies are angry at the organisers of the conference because they thought they wouldn't have to compete with their rivals at the conference.

Offering invitations to some of the most environmentally damaging corporations also exposes what Cop26 is really about.

Cop26 will be another conference that puts the bosses' profits over the needs of the planet and people.